



Title : Cultural perspectives on managing environmental practices: small and medium hotels in Nong Khai, Thailand

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CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON MANAGING
ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES: SMALL AND MEDIUM
HOTELS IN NONG KHAI, THAILAND

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JUNE 2016

UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON MANAGING
ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES: SMALL AND MEDIUM
HOTELS IN NONG KHAI, THAILAND

ANGWARA NA SOONTORN

A thesis submitted to the University of Bedfordshire in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
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Abstract

This research explores cultural aspects of Thai Small and Medium-sized Hotels (SMHs) as they navigate their way through environmental management problems. In addition to the context of business motivation, which sets the groundwork for the cultural attitudes findings, the study also examines how government officials' actions on environmental policy in relation to SMHs are affected by their cultural attitude.

An interpretive paradigm employing qualitative method (semi-structured interviews and observation) was conducted. Key informants are from 27 SMHs and seven related government officials from six districts in Nong Khai city. This study was piloted during June and July 2013 and the second main study during February and May 2014. Additional revisits and interviewing were conducted during May 2015.

This study reveals that relationships dominate SMH owners' motivation, and that they are motivated by family lifestyle, social position and business opportunity. Environmental implementation in SMHs is also mainly influenced by culture. A complex socio-cultural system, e.g. seniority and hierarchical, power-based notions and patron-client relationship, has led to the Thai style of enforcing legislative action in the government sector.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Bedfordshire

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Name of candidate: Angwara Na Soontorn

Signature:

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study explores ways in which the cultural Thai context in Thailand influences motivation, environmental practice implementation and the relationship with the local government sector that has responsibility for regulating and enforcing environmental laws.

This chapter introduces the research commencing with a discussion of the rationale for the study, and a description of the research location, Nong Khai province, Thailand. The chapter then sets out the significance, aims and objectives of the research. This is followed by outlines of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, the literature drawn upon, and methods. It ends with a summary of the organisation of the thesis.

1.2 Rationale for the Study

In the global economy, tourism activities are one of the main sources of foreign exchange, and economic activity, particularly for developing countries (Honey & Gilpin, 2009; Yeoman, 2000). However, tourism is a complex, multi-sectorial activity that utilises natural and environmental resources, and generally relies on extensive transport and services infrastructure. Tourism is a sector that depends heavily on the natural and cultural environments as fundamental business resources (Holden, 2008). However, the exploitation of these resources is increasingly alarming scholars and other observers, such as the United Nations; environmental problems such as the degradation of natural resources continue to cause significant concern (Sharpley, 2009).

The use of environmental resources is reaching a point at which it is no longer sustainable; resources are being exhausted and are in danger of losing the ability to renew themselves (Butler, 1999). A number of reports have raised these issues. For example, the World Conservation Strategy (WCS), the World Commission on the Environment and Development, in 1980 and 1981 respectively, have highlighted the extent of damage and degradation, and outlined ways in which tourism could be made more sustainable. The term 'sustainable development', came, it could be said, to global attention in 1992 at the United Nations Conference in Brazil, also known as the Earth Summit.

The principle of sustainable development set out in the reports mentioned above leads to the idea that sustainable tourism is about "ensuring economic and social benefits without harmful ecological impacts" (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, *Agenda 21*, 1992: 99). In the tourism context, sustainable tourism development is part of the general concept of sustainable development (Bramwell, 2004). Sustainable tourism consists of three main dimensions: environmental, economic, and socio-cultural (UNWTO, 1981). Additionally, it is a broader concept and sets out many frameworks, which have resulted in emergent forms of sustainable tourism, such as green tourism, ecotourism, community-based tourism, and responsible tourism (Garcia, 2008; Goodwin, 2011; Standford, 2006). In other words, the sustainability discussion has helped draw attention to the need for a balance between economic and environmental interests in tourism. According to Mihalic (2014), sustainable tourism's actual penetration into strategies and policies has resulted in many good practice and improvements, such as energy savings, recycling, a reduction of waste and emissions, and attempts at improving livelihoods of local populations. It has also included all stakeholders – non-governmental, governmental, tourism operators, tourists and local people. However, whilst the principle is considered to be a fundamental of tourism action, in reality sustainable tourism is found to be problematic by different stakeholders. For example, Szymanska's research (2013) in a national park in north-eastern Poland (a sample of 769 tourists), found a contradiction with their real green

behaviour, since 89 per cent claimed that they were environmentally aware, but almost 63 per cent did not know the term sustainable tourism.

Moreover, sustainable tourism management is considered to be a principle that all stakeholders should follow. International agencies promote this fundamental as a primary objective of tourism development. Perceptions of environmentally friendly management at the local level are varied. This is due to people's background. People are different from place to place, they are influenced by socially and culturally constructed factors, often interrelated with many influences, such as socio-demographics, religion, cultural and ethnic background, collective pressure, laws and regulation and medical coverage (Chen, 2015). In other words, there is a gap in sustainable tourism development and its management. The sustainability notion aims to bring out social, economic and environmental balance, but the concept can only express the primary objective; many sustainable initiatives launched cannot produce the desired outcome. Though it seems highly applicable to global actors, geographical differences and social culture tend to alter the implementation. Page and Dowling (2002) argue that people differ over the use of the resources and the degree to which an environmental problem exists.

This view pertains to the Eastern world, which has some unique principles towards nature. Prime among these principles is the idea that humans are not the dominating force in nature but rather, humans should live in harmony with nature, not attempting to dominate or control the natural environment. Nisbett (2005: 21) suggests that "[the] Chinese saw the world as consisting of continuously interacting substances. They see themselves as in harmony with humanity and nature". In this traditional view, Chinese would rather compromise than control nature. In the management of tourism development, Scherrer and Doohan (2011) argue that the dominant Western approach may not be appropriate for some indigenous populations, such as (in their case) the Australian aborigines. Until recently, environmental problems drew worldwide attention, but the majority of studies have investigated from the Western perspective (Opperman & Chon, 1997), which is that humans have to help conserve and renew the natural environment while using its resources. In this scenario or mindset, resources are

expected to be managed and controlled by humans. It is possible that such thinking is an indication that the environment is deeply embedded in Western thinking. Western thinking is rooted in developing rules that would allow prediction and control of their behaviour (Nisbett, 2005). Therefore, as such thinking goes, it lies within the ability of humans to control their environment. The differences in Western and Eastern thought has been investigated by Hashimoto (2000), whose study aimed to uncover the reasons underlying how people in the tourism sector perceive the natural environment. She argues that the government should be responsible for environmental issues rather than individuals. This study revealed that the Chinese and the Japanese attitudes towards the natural environment and resources are a belief in the power of 'natural healing'. This means humans have nothing to do with conserving natural resources, and the over confidence in technology does not quite agree with the view in the West that humans have to help take care of and renew the natural environment and resources while exploiting them.

These different senses of responsibility of the Chinese and the Japanese have made them relying too heavily on 'natural power' for maintenance and healing of environmental damage, and on technological 'quick fixes' that may lead to long-term problems.

Apart from the Western worldview, developing countries, including Thailand, have introduced mass tourism as an economic driving tool for developing social and economic progress. Environmental resources are regularly used as part of the tourism product. Environmental issues have always resulted from tourism activities: development of tourism has brought about deforestation, for example, according to Kuvan and Akan (2011), who studied positive and negative impacts of tourism development in Belek and Antalya, Turkey. Managers and local residents showed strong support for the view that lack of cooperation between public and private organisations related to forestry and tourism had negatively affected the forest in the area. As tourism has both positive and negative impacts, while sustainable tourism is perceived as 'good', in line with global environmental concerns, there is a search for tools to help reduce consumption of natural resources. Thus Western knowledge and technology have been introduced as a global

development tool via international agencies including the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), UNESCO World Heritage Centre, World Bank, World Travel and Tourism Council, Pacific Asian Travel Association (Stoddard *et al.*, 2012). For example, the Green Seal programme is run by the American Hotel and Lodging Association and Green Hotel Association, and the Green Globe certificate is associated with UNWTO and worldwide tourism agencies and destination communities. These certified programmes and initiatives indicate that tourism could reduce its energy demands. A number of environmental initiatives can be said to be environmental innovations.

Hjalager (1997) points out environmental innovations are related to product, knowledge, information technology and management, and these are recognised as exogenous (Mensell, 2011; Aldebert *et al.*, 2011; Van de Zwaan *et al.*, 2002; Lagos & Curtis, 2004; Orfila-Sintes *et al.*, 2005). For example, Aldebert *et al.* (2011) argue that in knowledge-based and innovation processes in tourism evolution, new innovation always comes from external knowledge.

As the Western perspective of environmental management may be based on the Western view of the environment, this may be beyond the boundary of Eastern familiarity. The different perception of the environment by people in the community of the outside world was described by William and Reid of Chapter 12, in the book *Tourism Geography* (William and Lew, 2014) as an 'exogenous environment'. This may affect the community view and action, particularly when conducting environmental practices. Different geographical locations when conducting an exogenous approach would make for distinctive outcomes. Cultural and social context affect community action and attitude and also influence action towards an exogenous environmental approach.

Consequently, studying environmental practices in tourism businesses in different parts of the world has raised interest. Particularly as conducting it in different cultural contexts would seem to produce a variety of results. Additionally, hotel businesses could not be other than significant natural resource consumers. They are facilitators for tourists, and use natural resources for accommodating their clients, e.g. swimming pool, spa, and room amenities. According to Middleton (1998), the tourism industry is dominated by Small and

Medium Entrepreneurs. This is evident in the worldwide tourism business, e.g. Spain (Rubio-Andrada *et al.*, 2011). Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in hotel business as a group also have a significant environmental impact: hotels, like other buildings, use electricity for lighting, cooling, appliances and fuel for heating (Kasim, 2009). In any discussion of carbon reduction or environmental improvements, it is vital to consider Small and Medium-sized Hotels (SMHs) as these SMEs play an important role in consuming environmental resources.

As in other parts of the world, the tourism sector in Thailand is dominated by SMEs. In particular, accommodation SMEs have increased as a result of tourism booming over recent decades. In recognition of the need to deliver sustainable tourism in Thailand, sustainable tourism development has now become main government policy (see the 6th national economic and social development plan - 1982–1986). Environmental practices have been brought in via global agencies for adoption in Thailand, e.g. the ‘7 Green’ policy, a well-known Green Leaf programme that is currently operating for hotel firms. Given the importance of SMHs within Thailand’s tourism product, their operations and perceptions in relation to environmental management are worthwhile subjects for research. Due to the number of Thailand SMHs businesses, SMHs is claimed to be the greatest numbers of accommodation sector. This is an area more complex than a preliminary glance would suggest. For example, previous studies have suggested that SMHs often have unconventional motivations for starting and running their businesses. Business is motivated by personal reasons, e.g. family, independence, social acceptance, and low-entry barriers (Benzing *et al.*, 2005; Chu *et al.*, 2007; Swierczek & Ha, 2003; Ahmad, 2014). Without even considering their experience and knowledge for tourism business, their knowledge about setting up environmental innovation in the company could be questioned, whether they are up to date on trends and what are global concerns. The interest of this study is how SMHs conduct environmental practices, what ‘motivation’ leads them to the business sector, and how they manage to deal with environmental resources in their business.

1.3 Study Site

Research into SMHs for this study takes place in Nong Khai province, in northeast Thailand. Lonely Planet describes the region as “occupying a narrow sweep along the banks of the Mekong [And] one of northeast Thailand’s most popular destinations” (<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/thailand/nong-khai-province>). Apart from the attractions that place it on the tourist trail, the province makes a particularly useful study site for a number of reasons. Firstly, Nong Khai is the researcher’s hometown, where she has seen much change and development since she was a child. It has thus become her interest for this study. Secondly, Nong Khai has a growing number of accommodation businesses, small and medium-sized firm in particular (table 1.1). As a result of the friendship bridge built in 1994 connecting Nong Khai and Vientiane, in the Laos People’s Democratic Republic, Nong Khai has steadily become a touristic city, due to its connection to Laos (see appendix 9). The bridge allows travellers to visit both Nong Khai and Vientiane, which are only 30 kilometres apart.

Thirdly, under the Asean Economic Community (AEC) there will be free flow of goods, services, investment capital and skilled labour following liberalization. Therefore, this is the opportunity in which the researcher could enhance the academic evidence for the city where she lives, especially as for SMHs in tourism development there is no study on SMHs in Nong Khai.

Figure 1.1: Regional map of Thailand and the city of Nong Khai



Source: Nong Khai Information [website]. Available at: <http://www.nongkhaiinformation.com>

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study finds its roots in a number of environmental issues that became dominant in the last century, in particular, increasing concerns about how the hospitality sector used natural resources (Bohdanowicz *et al.*, 2001; Pertric and Pranic, 2010). As natural resources are used for facilitating human living, the concern about the future generation has then become the concept when developing tourism known as ‘sustainable tourism’.

The environment is critical and the implementation of global environmental initiatives can be seen as varied, depending upon the country's use of environmental resources. According to Hashimoto (2000: 206),

In comparison with Europe (and with the exception of Japan), Asia accommodates far more inhabitants in poorer living conditions. High population density means more resource consumption and rapid economic development in order to feed the population. Because industrialisation and the spurring of economic growth in Asia have begun relatively recently, the scale and speed of environmental devastation with advanced technology are incomparable to those of the already developed countries.

Hence, this may lead to flexibility in control and management of environmental resource use, provided that development reaches the point at which modernization is equivalent to that in developed countries, and strict control would be later applied. The tourism industry is also in this mainstream development in developing countries, e.g. Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines (Li & Zhang, 1997). To some extent, developing countries have favoured tourism, since the historic success of Spain in using tourism as a driving force for economic growth and development (Holden, 2008). Countries worldwide have come to the point that sustainability is a mission whether they are developing or developed nations. Therefore, Thailand, as a developing country, must indicate how environmental sustainability policy is applied. Government authority has its role in enforcing this environmental notion with tourism businesses, and hotel entrepreneurs are included. Except for the policy, there are environmental practices to be introduced through various tools for those tourism businesses. These tools are expected to show some guidance and enhance environmental resources quality, e.g. ecolabels, environmental code of conduct, environmental programme and so forth. The hotel implementation of environmental practice is voluntary, depending upon their budget, hotel size and other features, e.g. owner-managers' knowledge/ attitude. Previous research illustrated that owner-managers' attitude is influential on hotel operation,

subsequently, having influence on the conduct of environmental practices, too, in SMHs in particular, as staff and owner-managers have close proximity to the operation (Kim, 2009). This is unlike large size hotels and chain hotels, where policy comes from head office or the company board. SMHs in the tourism industry are major businesses in Thailand that are of interest to this study.

SMHs are defined in various statements. For example, the National Statistical Office of Thailand (2012) defines Small hotels as those that have fewer than 60 rooms, with those that have between 60 and 150 rooms are recognised as medium-sized. The focus of this study is justified by the use of the Environmental Indicator Assessment (EIA), which differentiates the small and medium-sized hotels from the large hotels. The EIA is used when the business has more than 79 rooms, which is considered as a large hotel. This definition also applies to all provinces/ cities in Thailand.

To some extent, SMHs' characteristics have been investigated in a number of studies. Mostly, in the context of small and medium-sized general businesses, it has been found that there is an unconventional motivation for these SMEs in that they are motivated by independence of finance, social acceptance, family responsibility and opportunity of the business (Aramand, 2014; Getz & Carlsen, 2005; Chen & Yang, 2014; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Eser *et al.*, 2012; Kresier *et al.*, 2010; Tsamenyi *et al.*, 2008; Shane *et al.*, 1991; Fletcher *et al.*, 2009; Chu *et al.*, 2007). SMEs in some studies are called 'lifestyle business' (Chen & Elston, 2013; Kresier *et al.*, 2010; Yetim & Yetim, 2006). These SMEs are without sufficient knowledge and financial motivation (in the main), therefore, they seem to have operational problems in their business. This seems to happen with Thai SMHs; however, there is very little evidence on Thai SMH owner-managers' motivation, as Thai characteristics are characterised differently from the West. Besides, Thailand is a collective society (The Hofstede Centre, 2015): they have been surveyed culturally by Hofstede's '6-D model', the results indicating that it is a society in which inequalities are accepted; a strict chain of command and protocol are observed; and employees show loyalty, respect and deference for their superiors in return for protection and guidance.

This may lead to paternalistic management. Loyalty to the in-group in a collectivist culture is paramount (family, extended family, or extended relationship) and also ranges in high uncertainty avoidance. These absolute characters with a cultural bound could have influences on the SMH owner-managers' perspective of their daily operation. Therefore, there being dissimilar characteristics to Western societies, known individualistic, has enhanced the interest in how these SMH owner-managers in a collective society view themselves in global environmental concerns and what motivates them to have these hotel businesses. As earlier studies in some collective societies, e.g. China, Taiwan and Japan, have shown their view towards the natural environment that authoritarian and anthropocentric attitudes towards the natural environment and resources affect the perceptions of people, as does context. It could be said that the Chinese, Taiwanese and Japanese live in harmony with nature by exploiting resources as nature is recoverable by itself, its healing power is greater than humans would be able to manage. The literature tells us that there are specific reasons why SMHs have not been able to contribute to effective sustainable tourism.

In general, a difficulty is that tourism stakeholders are unable to put existing policy into action (Dief & Font, 2010; Mycoo, 2006). This is particularly relevant to SMHs as they operate under severe financial and human resource constraints (Ayuso, 2007; Farmaki *et al.*, 2014; Logar, 2010; Moriarty *et al.*, 2008). These are important and usually found in SMHs. However, SMHs may only conduct environmental practices legislated in the law (Kasim, 2009). Participation in a voluntary programme could depend on their availability of budget. The government is unable to manipulate them other than by legislation, but relevant officials could campaign to promote environmental behaviour. This is surely possible. On the other hand, in reality, government itself also faces a number of problems, e.g. land-use planning (Krutwaysho & Bramwell, 2009; Soteriou & Coccossis, 2010), cultural difference leading to different outcome (Wongthong & Harvey, 2014), and lack of knowledge of human resource related environmental practices (Carter *et al.*, 2015; Churugsa *et al.*, 2010; Connell *et al.*, 2009; Dredge *et al.*, 2011). Due to approach used these do not emphasise sustainable development policy (Dredge, 2011). Additionally, the

understanding about cultural factors is also emphasised in implementing environmental policy (Boyled, 1998). As evident in Thailand, the national government has some limitations in engaging the 7 Green policy into local government, e.g. lack of direct involvement, lack of clarified terms and the cultural issues to be considered. *IT has* even been highlighted that practices from some countries may not be applicable for others.

1.5 Research Aims and Objectives

1.5.1 Research aim

The primary aim of this study is to critically analyse Thai small and medium-sized hotels (SMHs) in the context of business motivation, environmental management and problems. Additionally, this study seeks to develop an understanding of government officials' cultural attitudes and actions towards environmental policy in relation to the SMHs. In achieving these aims, the research will provide clear empirical evidence of business motivation and environmental practices in Nong Khai SMHs, including how SMHs deal with government environmental policies and initiatives. Particularly, it will provide information on the cultural influence on Thai SMHs' attitude and management style, which are important in understanding Thai collective behaviour and attitude on operations. There is no clear evidence on what Thai SMHs have done about environmental practices in this particular area. Most research has not yet focused on SMHs while SMHs are widely operated in Thailand.

1.5.2 Research objectives

In order to support the research aim, four specific objectives were developed that would:

1. Explore the factors that motivate SMHs owner-managers to operate accommodation business;
2. Critically evaluate SMHs' cultural attitudes towards environmental practices;
3. Understand the attitudes and interactions between government officials and SMHs in relation to compliance with environmental legislation;

4. Analyse the cultural attitude barriers towards environmental practices in SMHs.

1.6 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This study look at three main points of environmental management, as follow; the SMHs motivation; the eastern way thinking of environmental management; the government attitude.

The conceptual and theoretical framework of each of these aspects is discussed in turn, In terms of SMHs motivation, the approach that SMHs motivation is influenced by unconventional factor, this type of business called “lifestyle business” (Holmes and Zimmers, 1994). Holmes and Zimmers (ibid), stated that searching for happiness; money is less significant. Living in the area, being their own boss and doing interesting work characterise lifestyle business (Getz & Carlsen, 2005; Chen & Yang, 2014; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011). Lifestyle motivation is predominant in tourism business (Putateera, 2009; Getz and Carlsen, 2005; Shaw, 2003). As a study of Carlsen, Getz and Ali-knight (2010) , for instance, the dominant goal of entering business is to respond to the lifestyle followed by the business opportunities and investment. The dominant reason related to family , lifestyle whilst businesses are not gender or age specific.

Moreover, some small owner/managers have found that they were driven by community and environmental concern (Doorne, 2000) or routinely influent decision-making (Domenico, 2005). Studied by Shaw and William (2004), claimed that lifestyle entrepreneurship could be compatible with professional firms but within particular cultural framework [lifestyle such as surfing business, the company is run by professional team who wanted to live in the beach community].

In terms of Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs), motivation of SME in tourism may have seen non-business oriented as the reason for beginning business; thought profitability is also the main and final point of running business. As studied mentioned above, motivation is driven by a personal lifestyle. Additionally, upon reviewing literature, it was found that cultural perspective has influenced the way of thought, such as motivation. Thus The Thai characteristic was shaped by using study of Boyle (1998), Niffenegger *et al.* (2006) and Jirapornkul and Yolles (2010) in order to understand their motivation. Moreover, this cultural perspective and the term “Thai politeness” (Intachakra, 2012) are also used as an analysis of the attitude toward environmental management.

Cultural background is therefore seen influent toward decision-making (Zepple, 2009; Witt, 2012; Thomas, Shaw and page, 2011). According to Syamwill (2010), cultural is the resultant of all things that influence their life including their cognitive perception, customs, political views as well as context of the physical and non-physical environment that surround them. It is the way of thinking, perception and belief and it is an abstraction of behaviour.

Implementation of environmental practices and understanding the government's perspective, the concept of “Thai politeness” are used as a theoretical framework. Together with “particularity” concept was used in understanding Thai characteristic and area context.

1.7 Research Methods

1.7.1 Introduction

The study aims to gain a better understanding of environmental attitudes and practices in SMHs contextualised by an understanding of the motivation for starting and running a business. These are multiple ideas and therefore, an interpretive paradigm is applied and a qualitative approach is used.

This study employs an interpretive paradigm to develop and achieve the research objectives. The primary focus is to understand the SMHs' motivation for running a business. However, the experiences of individuals are substantially context-bound; and people being studied cannot be free from place and time (Jennings, 2010). Interpretive orientations perceive ontology as multiple realities or multiple truths, based on a person's construction of reality (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2013). These constructions are constantly revised as changes are likely to occur and knowledge can depend on social factors and interpretation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This person's construction stresses the "inter-subjective" nature of human interaction (Yates, 1998: 136). Hence, the interpretation of this study depends upon the social context of an individual's time and place.

With regard to interpretivism, the paradigm is advantageous if the researcher becomes part of the social group being studied; therefore, a qualitative method is employed. The emphases of qualitative research are to understand and interpret the social context of data about activities, events, occurrences and behaviours (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). At this juncture, the findings of a qualitative approach are specific to those who are involved, but the observer will derive an in-depth knowledge of the tourism phenomenon (Jennings, 2004).

1.7.2 Sample and sampling technique

This study drew data from two main groups of key informants; the SMH owner-managers and government officials. Tourists were not interviewed as the research objective is not focused particularly on the interaction of the SMHs and clients. As there are many kinds of stakeholder, this research cannot concentrate on of them in the time available for the research. The SMH owner-managers were selected by purposive sampling, which is the method used in selecting informants with the researcher's judgement on those likely to provide relevant information. This study was started when an official introduced the researcher to the SMHs. The authorities are also the local people who are acquainted with the business owners. To be introduced by local officials enhances the reliability of the study data. Additionally, the entrepreneurs are likely to help provide interview data for

academic purpose. Introduction via the government agents is trusted to mean that it is legal to gain data from them.

Then the researcher developed the criteria for qualification as a prospective informant from information provided by the official and observation. According to Allen (1971 in Tongco, 2007: 151), criteria are set on what would make a good informant, and what would make a bad informant. Based on these, a list of criteria was set when the researcher inspects the area and during the introduction stages to the local people, for example, the availability of time of the prospective informant, business location, and voluntary participation. Tongco 2007, Seidler, 1974, Tremblay, 1957) information (data) was sought from both sides of the equation by interviewing hotel owner-managers and government officials about the same topic (sustainability).

According to Sanders (1960 in Tongco 2007), it is expected that the researcher may run into some inconsistencies in the data. Therefore, these data need to be verified. Thus, a trip back to the fieldwork area near the end of the study is highly recommended to clean up these inconsistencies (Tongco, 2007: 154). The researcher asked for permission to contact the informants in order to revisit them and for additional interviewing. To some extent, other contact methods were also used, e.g. telephone, postal mail and email.

1.7.3 The pilot study

Before undertaking the main data collection fieldwork, a pilot study was conducted for eight weeks between 10th May and 5th June 2013 in Nong Khai province, Thailand. The pilot study addressed an unexpected issue, the 'introduction stage' (as explained below), which was anticipated could be taken conveniently during the main field work. However, the researcher was advised by the local government authority (through her own network) that business owner-managers should be introduced via local government agents. Otherwise, this would reduce the reliability of researcher and they would not participate in the study. The pilot study then became the introduction stage, but this delivered the better situation for the further, main interviewing stage. This pilot study clearly showed

the proper way to manage to deal with hotel owner-managers in order to arrange the interviews. This pilot stage also led the researcher to the proper preparation for the main data collection. The reflection on the effectiveness of the approach came right after the pilot study.

1.7.4 The main study

The main study was carried out with SMH owner-managers and government officials over two separate periods: the first during June and July 2013 and the second during Feb and May 2014. The additional revisit and interviewing was conducted during May 2015.

Data were gathered from 28 key informants, 20 of whom were SMH owners and one SMH manager, and seven government officials.

Semi-structured interviews and participant observation were used to collect the data. All the interviews were voice-recorded on getting permission with a consent form from the key informants. All the key informants were also introduced to the research objective and academic purpose, and they were confirmed of the anonymity and confidentiality of their information by the use of pseudonyms in any writing. The interviewing and the business establishments were also photographed in order to evidence the business characteristics and provide an overview of the business appearance.

1.7.5 Data analysis

The data were analysed by thematic analysis technique, as introduced by Braun and Clarke (2006): (i) becoming familiar with the data; (ii) generating initial codes; (iii) searching for themes; (iv) reviewing themes; (v) defining and naming themes; and (vi) producing the report (Ployrungraj, 2012: 182). Analysing the data manually helped to immerse the researcher in the data without the kind of digital intervention of an analytical software package. Thai language interviews were transcribed. This enables in-depth reflection and is able to start the process of theming. It is time-consuming, but it is also the suitable method for the researcher to spend time with the data and helps recall the proper

meaning of the speaker at that moment. This study had no assistant staff, so that the researcher knows best in the research fieldwork as the researcher works entire study on her own.

1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis is comprised of ten chapters. Chapter one presents an introduction, including the rationale, details of the study site (location), the significance of the study, research aims and objectives, and an overview of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. The research methodology is also provided.

Chapters two, three four and five present the detail of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Chapter two reviews development in a developing country and the emerging of the alternative paradigm, the exogenous concept and the increase of environmental schemes. Chapter three highlights the general motivation of conducting an environmental programme in accommodation business. The chapter also looks at uncertainty and the complexity of tourist concerns of the environmental attitude. Chapter three also reviews owner-manager decision-making in SMEs, SMHs' organisational culture and the relation to setting up a business. Chapter four reviews the environmental exercise by government. Chapter five reviews the tourism situation in Thailand and provides insights into Thai culture and Buddhist characteristics.

Chapter six outlines the methodological approaches taken, including the justification of the use of an interpretive paradigm, samples and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis approach and particularity of the study.

Chapters seven and eight set out the main themes. Chapter seven presents the main themes relating to SMH motivation and environmental practices in operation. Chapter eight presents the main theme relating to the government and environmental legislative action and the attitude towards legal action. Chapters nine and nine relate the findings of this study to the theories and the key concepts presented in the literature review.

Chapter eleven discusses the contribution to knowledge, limitations, and suggestions for further study.

Chapter 2:

Introduction to Tourism Development and Exogenous Approaches

2.1 Introduction

Given Thailand's status as a developing country (United Nations, 2013), it is useful to have an understanding of the developing-country context and how Thailand has evolved in terms of tourism development in recent years. The chapter begins by reviewing development evolution, tourism in developing countries, and endogenous and exogenous influences. How exogenous approaches influence Thailand is discussed, and that the environmental problem is one of the global issues that has attracted international attention on becoming more concerned about development approaches. Environmental innovations are discussed, and the chapter ends with a discussion on the emergence of environmental schemes.

2.2 Evolution of Development Theories

Development is recognised as synonymous with progress or positive transformation, or what Thomas (2000a, cited in Sharpley, 2009: p23) claims to be "good change" or "growth" or 'change' (Promsiri, 1969). Development in this generalist sense is seen as moving forward or advancing from one to another (McGregor, 2008: p6). Therefore, neither developed nor developing countries have reached their final state: it is a continuous process. Holden (2008) suggests that 'development' and 'growth' are used interchangeably. But there is a considerable difference as development refers to a 'better' outcome. However, McGregor (2008) argued that 'despite the concept's popularity its

definition remains elusive, slipping between different meanings for different people and places and changing over time:

During the first few years after the Second World War, development was focused on economic growth. The emergence of modernization (alternatively known as industrialisation) is a Western political/socio-economic construct, replicating the economic and political structures of the US in other parts of the world (McGregor, 2008: p8). A key component of the process was the introduction of one or more 'growth poles,' such as specific industries or businesses requiring overseas investment. This type of development was the dominant influence from the 1950s to 1970s, and the relationship between economic growth-based modernization and tourism is evident. Leys's (1996) explanation, in the book *The rise and fall of development theory*, starts from the distinction between 'traditional' and 'modern' societies, which was derived from Max Weber via Talcott Parsons. 'Traditional' societies are those in which relationships were 'particularistic' rather than 'universalistic'. Traditionally characterised societies see low level of division of labour, dependency on agriculture, low rates of growth of production, largely local networks of exchange and restricted administrative competence. Thus, modern society displays the opposite features (Leys, 1996: 45). The 'traditional society' was named as primitive and backward, defined by their lack when compared to the final stage that modelled on the US society. The suggestion that all countries should undergo modernisation showed little awareness about the 'particularities' of place and wrongly positioned the US as a desirable endpoint than the other places (McGregor, 2008: p8)

Obviously, it has been shown that Western perspectives have long heavily influenced developing countries. This is hardly surprising, since the same Western view dominates major development and financing institutions, especially the World Bank.

The two big theories of development, modernization and the dependency paradigm were in strong opposition in the 1960s and 1970s, acting as proxy debates for Cold War arguments, as the failure of developing countries to modernize reflected their economic and political position relative to developed nations (Holden, 2008). According to Leys (1996: 12), the early 1970s, an era of dependency theory, which converted many of the

assumptions of modernization theory, saw the metropolitan as maleficent, not beneficent, and inflows of foreign investment were seen as giving rise to much greater interest and profit outflow (p.12).

The 1970s and 1980s was an era of large-scale production in political and economic dimensions throughout the Western world: a re-evaluation of the 'local' (Cooke, 1996). Rigg (2003), in his book *Southeast Asia: the human landscape of modernization and development*, argued that the alternative development paradigm had seen significant growth during the 1980s and 1990s. He claimed that the Western approach to development, known as modernization, created severe tensions and dislocations in the society, economy and environment of less developed countries. Sharpley (2003) argued that the principal focus should be on local 'bottom-up' development endeavours, to ensure that production is based on local need and political freedom: development itself must be environmentally sustainable. Thus, sustainable development proposes a long-term, holistic perspective that espouses equity, choice, political freedom (from dependency), cultural integrity, and development within environmental parameters (Bramwell, 2004). Mainstream development crystallized into an alternative, people-centred approach to development. According to Pieterse (2001: 79), the report of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation *What now? Another Development*, development should be "geared to the satisfaction of need", "endogenous and self-reliant" and "in harmony with the environment". This approach has been carried further under the heading of alternative development. Over the years, alternative development has reinforced developmentalism, such as anti-capitalism, green thinking, feminism, ecofeminism, Buddhist economy, and cultural critique. This included introducing alternative approaches and redefining the goals of development.

The difference between the 'mainstream' development approach and the alternative approach is that the latter clearly emphasises the cultural significance of moderate methods and appropriate technologies, rather than optimizing modern technologies, which may not work in a local environment. The other strand to alternative development is the idea of promoting self-reliance, bottom-up participation, an internal people-being

focus and consideration of ethical and moral issues. The alternative paradigm searches for the 'particular' context of an area, where biological and physical elements are seemingly different. Therefore, this alternative paradigm is based on a particularity of perspective, and is of particular importance to Asian countries (Rigg, 2003). In other words an outcome of this broader view of development has been a greater awareness of diversity and difference. The 'one size fits all' approach of economic theorists has been replaced by an appreciation of geography-different places develop in different ways (McGregor, 2008: p13). More importantly, such uniqueness may be based in distinct social areas, for example Muslim, Buddhist and Chinese systems, making the Western point of view secondary. In other words, any society places its own social value and social culture as the most highly acknowledged; therefore, a new approach paradigm that aims to place its know-how would find it hard for the Western one to be used by that society.

The alternative approach to development emerged in opposition to the post-war binary of modernization versus dependency, which is full of limited arguments, and ideologically bounded (Burns & Novelli, 2007). Therefore, the alternative approach is contextualised within different geographical locations and complex social systems including beliefs and attitudes, in other words, cultural behaviours and thoughts, which reflect the 'particularity' of the area (McGregor, 2008).

According to Neto (2003), the alternative approach has been introduced as approach implies social and cultural relation to be highlighted for economic improvement. Mass production, bottom-up compliance, Western internationalized standards are of the 'modernization' approach, which holds less importance than what concern should be about in localized production, and cultural and social constructs. The previous 'right' Western values or its international standard application, which claimed to be conducted by nations worldwide, are an opposite notion to the alternative development approach. Bringing together economic, cultural and social contexts of different nation's means some areas/regions are 'telling' something about their inhabitants, memories and histories. It accepts differences of human and social constructs as worthy of concern. This social and

cultural context is introduced when applied development towards economic activity included tourism.

2.3 Tourism's Role in Development in Developing Countries

Third World countries, less developed countries, developing countries or the Global South are some of the terms used to group a large number of countries into one category (Operman & Chon, 1997; Sharpley, 2009) based upon an economic comparison with the more developed countries of the West (Holden, 2008). According to Holden (2007), the term 'West' is used from a political perspective rather than a geographical context, to indicate countries that meet the defined economic criteria of the United Nations (UN) to be considered developed countries. However, these terms are not formal ones, as noted by the UN itself:

The designations "developed" and "developing" are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgments about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process. (United Nations Statistics Division-Standard Country and Area Codes Classifications, UNSTATS, 2015: ii)

According to Sharpley (2003), tourism has been introduced as the 'growth pole' of many developing countries. At the same time, concepts associated with modernization theory in general are mirrored in tourism development in particular. Declining terms of trade for most developing countries' exports, such as copper and tea during the mid-1980s (Holden, 2008), encouraged a search for other economic opportunities. At that time, 50 to 70 per cent of people in developing countries were directly dependent on agriculture, which can result in numerous problems. For instance, agriculture can be an unreliable and inconsistent source of revenue, with prices set elsewhere by commodity brokers, reliant on consistent weather conditions, and at risk from disease and infestation. With the strong growth in demand for world travel, developing countries conceived tourism as an alternative to industrialisation (Opperman & Chon, 1997). Nonetheless, tourism in developing countries is not confined to the immediate post-war era; it only increased

markedly in the last 30 to 40 years. Growth was more dramatic in the East Asia / Pacific region, where tourist arrivals rose from a mere 190,000 in 1950 to 93.1 million by 2013 (Statista, 2015).

Thus, economic development through tourism has been a favoured tool of governments for some decades (Holden, 2008). Governments recognise the potential for foreign direct investment (FDI), foreign exchange revenues, direct, indirect and induced job creation, and beneficial links that stimulate other sectors for services and facilities, such as fishing, until the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the alternative development /paradigm emerged.

According to Sharpley (2003), it became obvious that tourism was not the development agent it had been thought to be. Mass tourism required high investment costs in all sorts of ways, from hotels and resorts to transport infrastructure, education and training and led to a high dependency on foreign capital, know-how, and management personnel (Bryden, 1973; Muller, 1984; Oestreich, 1997; Pavaskar, 1982, cited in Operman & Chon, 1997: 39). Furthermore, Chaperon and Bramwell (2013) note that the relationship between the destination, the means and ownership of production of mass tourism, and economic development, resulted in the political centre receiving a disproportionate share of financial benefits from the industry: the entire organisation and control resides in the metropolitan core region. On different scales, exploitation results in peripheral countries being actively under-developed by developed or economic-centred countries.

Tourism development has been favoured for economic development as the tool of the government i.e. Spain (Holden, 2008: p107), where tourism can bring such foreign exchange income as such tourists are from international travellers. Additionally, job creation from tourism activities link with other sectors for services and facilities such as fishing. Until the late 1970s and early 1980 when the alternative development/ paradigm emerged. The question to what extent the tourism allows economic growing but indicator that measuring the growth rate of economy in each country, known as 'Gross Domestic Product' or GDP, do not evaluate the cost of environmental resources.

Environment as a source is being used for economic goal. Pollution is a consequence of hard industry and many economic activities. Tourism is being asked as the natural destination and resources are of the capital of economic investment also (ibid).

Since the post-World War II, economic improvement was only one dimension of mainstream development where it is from Western idea (ibid). Obviously, it is shown that developing countries have long been obsessed by Western view.

There has been emergent development theory that reflects the misguided nature of the previous development paradigm. It is called 'alternative development', also known as 'sustainable development'. According to Bodosca and Mihnea Diaconescu (2014; pp230), Sustainable development, it is one of the most emphasized topics when talking about tourism. It is a multidimensional theme that emerged and it became prominent and on everyone's agenda after the Bruntland report from 1987, when it was defined as: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their own needs". According to Wall (2009), it also supported the empowerment of people to be involved in the decisions that influence the quality of their lives. Belatedly, the sustenance of culture has also been incorporated so that it is commonly argued that initiatives ideally should be economically viable, environmentally sensitive and also culturally appropriate (ibid: p38).

2.4 Alternatives development paradigm

During 1970s and 1980s, it was an era of large-scale restoring in political and economic dimension throughout the Western world; it was a revaluation of the 'local' (Cooke, 1996).

According to Rigg (1997) stated in the book *"South East Asia: the human landscape of modernization and development"*. The view of alternative paradigm is seen a growth during 1980s and 1990s, as there has been considered the Asian in such particular way. Evidence is the Western approach of development, known as modernization, has made

severe tensions and dislocations in society, economy and environment. Approach has been made mass production with low quality of development, broken down existing structure of authority, corroded communities and demolishes lives and livelihoods. Hence, the search for alternative development has been concerned over the past decade.

The alternative approach is, therefore, opened to the different geographical location and complex social system e.g. belief, attitude. In other words, cultural behaviour and thought, which addresses 'particularity' of the area. Religious has also been mentioned that it is inevitable to consider when it has great influence toward social thought and behaviour. Additionally, alternative approach can be seen that it is accepted the alternative worldview. The worldview, which basically understood as how one sees the world. According to Annick-Hedlund-de Witt (2012), illustrates that lifestyle such as use of energy, transportation, support for policy etc. can be deeply embedded in worldview, value and cultural associations. To what extent, worldview is the collection of values, beliefs, habits and norms that form the frame of social behaviour (Session, 1985). Worldview thus profoundly influences perceptions of human-environment relationship, thereby informing environmental attitude and sustainable lifestyle. Worldview is therefore the way to behave of a person that is individual and grounded by social belief where person surrounded. Personal and social beliefs are interlinked. Consequently, context and social construct are formed distinctively by social group and location as "those who subscribe to a given worldview share a definition of the assumptions and goals of their society" (Session, 1985: p42). Additionally, shared worldview is assumption that could be made same solution (Session, *ibid*). Arising attentions regarding certain social setting and geographical locations, local has produced its view and led to knowledge and management behaviours differently (Knight, 2007; Hashimoto, 2000).

According to Dorji (2001), Bhutan's tourism is the example for using an alternative approach, which emphasises environmental and cultural policy. The royal government has clearly set up a tourism development framework based on the limited environmental and cultural resources to offer. However, Bhutan has faced some concerns about

environmental and cultural impacts and also been challenged with difficult development sometimes, e.g. 1) lack of community involvement, as the royal government has privatised tourism activity, a tour operator must be licensed and deal with the government as the main authority. This has brought lack of local participation. 2) Deterioration in pricing integrity, price cutting for tour operators and their outbound partners, has led to deterioration in the quality of services provided. 3) Weak institutional base: as there is no service institution for training in Bhutan, most companies have problems in attracting and keeping adequately trained employees at all levels. The royal government has then moved to address more sustainable policy; they were involved in the process of refinement “whereby attempts are made by the industry itself to mitigate any negative environmental and cultural impacts; explore and develop the numerous niche markets, such as eco-tourism, that offer significant growth potential and are consistent with the other development objectives of the royal government; and increase the participation of local communities in tourism activities” (Dorji, 2001: 91). Even though Bhutan has been studied as a case of good practice of sustainable tourism, they still face some problems. However, the way the royal government deals is fast moving and successfully in control, and it has put high value on the environment and culture. A tourist tax application charge before travelling to Bhutan is the obvious policy that shows how Bhutan is strict on the impact of tourism on the country. Also, only licensed tour operators that are qualified by the royal government are able to operate tours. These policies are not, yet, applied in nations worldwide. Thus, Bhutan is consistently claiming its country as quality travel.

2.5 Endogenous and Exogenous Influences

As mentioned earlier, ‘Western’, ‘North’ and ‘West’ refer not principally to geographical orientation, but to theories and practices which draw their insight from the modernity project (Mensell, 2011: 5). Mass tourism requires high investment costs in all kinds of services including accommodation and lodging, transport and services infrastructure, and education and training (Opperman & Chon, 1997: 39). The economic evolutionary pattern moves from time to time, from modernization (Rostow, 1960) to the alternative

development decade (Mowforth & Munt 1998), and also between mass tourism and alternative tourism.

Exogenous has always been discussed with the opposite meaning to endogenous. These two terms are used in development discussion in accordance with modernization theory. According to Pieterse (2001: 43-86), most forms of evolutionism conceived of development as being natural and endogenous, whereas modernization theory makes room for exogenous influences. Endogenous development implies a refutation of the view of development which equates modernization and Westernization. An endogenous goal is then “generated from within”, so that “modernization of tradition” means the revalorization and adaptation of existing social and cultural capital. Therefore, endogenous is fundamental to alternative development. Claiming to be globalization, universalism is not necessary to improve from within, by means of local resources and capital, not only physical but also cultural.

Specifically, endogenous tourism development is a form of local development that activates the participating initiatives and local development factors (organisations, actors, local businesses, local initiatives and spirit of enterprise) for sustainable consumption of natural and man resources (Lagos and Curtis, 2004: p6).

On the other hand, Hannan (2002: p232) argued development of tourism by globalization could be brought to positive change as tourism could be perceived as not necessarily strategies that solve underdevelopment, rather they combine in creating a subdomain of development that is politically, economically, culturally and environmentally manageable for a variety of agencies and structures. Moreover, the local change of external intervention is from the resistance of its locale; the local has power to challenge or allow and decide what should be adopted. Globalization is then improving their growth. Perhaps, interaction between global movement and the local could lead to negative outcomes, too. For example, Kibicho (2009) studied tourism in Malindi, Kenya, and found that sex tourism was flourishing due to a peripheralisation process. This study suggested the local to be more engaged in tourism but not dependence on external centre tourism.

Exogenous, then, can be considered the external fundamental, which is shaped by the Western development concept and through international agency. With the emergence in the new century of environmentalism, cultural critique and anti-capitalism, still, the search for tools and measurements is in an opposite way. While endogenous strategy is unrelentingly encouraged, exogenous power still exists as the way global agencies motivate via global standards, tools and new initiatives, e.g. environmental practices. The issue of environmental problems has always existed in all new development paradigms. Tourism participates in this problem; it is the tool of modern, developed countries to intervene in the others so they develop. Tourism is claimed to be one of the massive natural resource consumers that has brought about environmental problems. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2015) uncontrolled conventional tourism poses potential threats to many natural areas around the world. It can put enormous pressure on an area, such as soil erosion, increased pollution, and discharge into the sea. This negative impact occurs when the level of visitor use is greater than the environment's ability to cope with this use within the acceptable limits of change. The negative impact can be traced by the study of McDowall and Choi (2010), who studied Thai locals' perception of tourism's impact by selecting two destinations representing domestic and international tourist destinations. The result of this study indicated that locals were aware of negative environmental impact, which tourism brought to their community, e.g. air, water pollution and degradation of the natural environment. It is the construction of accommodation services that destroys natural resources.

Environmental problems have always existed in tourism activity: mass tourism has brought about pollution. While alternative tourism (also known as responsible, green or ecotourism) is seen to be 'good', it has created different troubles, e.g. in South America, where a variety of responsible tourism initiatives took place, with the focus only on community-based projects, introducing mass tourism in terms of production and consumption (Sharpley, 2009).

It has been a long journey since developing nations began improving and searching for a better life by looking at international standards from the Global North. Hence, in line with environmental concerns all over the world, there is a search for tools to help reduce consumption of natural resources, as well as enhancing the capacity of natural resource usage in order to sustain tourism in the long term: so-called 'sustainable tourism'. Environmental resources are regularly used as part of the tourism product. Environmental resources are at a critical stage, being both intensively utilised for tourist activities and as commercial attractions. Thus, Western knowledge and technology have been introduced as a global development tool via international agencies such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the various agencies of the World Bank Group, and the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA). For example, environmental technology, it is believed, could save much energy.

Environmental innovation is seemingly achieved by good practice of human resource management, well collaboration by staff and manager in the firm along with support from the government, but still very little found in SME (Wen-Jung Chen, 2011). On the other hand, innovation can be emerged by the interaction of tourism activity. Locally, tourism acts as a link to new markets and as an arena for knowledge exchange (Brouder, 2012). At this decade, it is difficult to separate the interaction between the local and outsider; its interaction could be possibly knowledge, cultural movement and other imported products. However, interaction between exogenous and endogenous would make different output, particularly the local. As creative outposts are characterized by their relative isolation from the core and from other rural communities, but it is also by their relative cooperation and fruitful interaction locally (Brouder, 2012).

As it is now, the alternative is becoming more concerned about 'local' scale, identity and cultural perspective. Global agencies that wish to continue development should reconsider that their approach exactly fits to the uniqueness and the particularity of the destinations.

Even though the alternative development paradigm has opened up to consideration of difference, the focus of the alternative paradigm is on methodology of development,

agents and objectives. According to Pieterse (2001), methodology is endogenous and participatory (self-reliant), agent is community not government, called development from below, and objective is from the basic need or community need. Tourism in developing countries is challenging, again, to the current alternative development. However, raising concerns of local uniqueness, different needs, has questioned the global approach that promotes on environmental approaches to be used with countries worldwide when conducting environmental practices. However, introducing environmental initiatives is discussed below. The using of environmental initiatives towards different country contexts is still questions whether they are suitable in this current alternative development paradigm or whether it is just other ways of the developing countries ruling.

2.6 Environmental Innovativeness

Hjalager (1997: 36-38) developed a typology of innovations related to the environment, as follows:

- Product innovations and product development based on the exploitation of natural resources, e.g. guides, tour operator services, and marketing and packaging, and the use of infrastructure including accommodation and certain design standards (Hjalager, 1997: p36).
- Classical process innovation that the process intensified by means of technology in order to achieve labour savings or savings of other production inputs in the kitchens, guestrooms, e.g. low-energy electric bulbs and improved water sewage systems (Hjalager, 1997: p37).
- Process innovations in information handling and information technology with regard to monitoring systems for total quality control, including environmental controls, using management tools, green auditing and communication with the consumer (Hjalager, 1997: p38).
- Management innovations, which could take place in cooperation with one or more of these agents. The handling of people (e.g. residents, staff and tourists) and

the creation of appropriate incentive systems including an environmental agenda form the core of managerial innovations (Hjalager, 1997: p38).

From Hjalager's typology of environmental innovation, innovations involve human resources, hardware and software and also knowledge for the creation of service innovation. However, innovations are not significantly related to high-tech equipment; but innovations can be about integrating existing local knowledge to guide environmental management (Hjalager, 1997; Brouder, 2012). This use of local knowledge in daily practice can be seen at the local level; for example, enhancing endogenous knowledge is critically important as its particularity shapes identity differently in different locations (Briggs, 2005). Therefore, using local knowledge can be a critical factor in sustainability, and must be central, grounded and integrated into the intervention programme from the start. This fulfils a vital function by demonstrating the importance and relevance of indigenous knowledge, and the ways in which local people in communities have been able to develop and use such knowledge in their everyday practices.

There is abundant research on environmental innovation (Chen & Chen, 2012; Brown & Kaewkitipong, 2009; E. Christian Wells et al, 2016; Pikkemaat & Peters, 2014; Rahaman *et al.*, 2012; Tekken and Kropp, 2015) as environmental technology was considered exogenous (Chen, 2015; Mansell, 2011; Aldebert *et al.*, 2011; Van de Zwaan *et al.*, 2002; Lagos & Curtis, 2004; Orfila-Sintes *et al.*, 2005). This is because technology, knowledge and new practices are interventions from the external cultural landscape. Other studies focus on endogenous study of interaction within social circumstance and change, which has developed to respond to the criticism of the exogenous model (Sandvick *et al.*, 2014; Brouder, 2012; Briggs, 2005).

Accordingly, Meyer (1994) defined,

“Exogenous influences are not-local social, economic, political or technological forces that emanate from outside a business system, but which nevertheless impact in important ways upon firms and their environments”.

Mansell (2011: 6) argues that:

In brief, economists traditionally take technological change to be exogenous. This model assumes that technological progress is generated by processes external to the operation of the economic system, such as the search for new sources of knowledge, ...in the context of developing countries, these insights are often translated into an emphasis on the need to invest in leading-edge technologies with little consideration of the existing conditions of labour and capital use.

In terms of environmental innovativeness, it can be seen from the above quote that endogenous factors are typically local within geographical boundaries. It is thus a native instrument grounded in, and interpreted within, its specific use in terms of location, and local-based knowledge in terms of function. On the other hand, exogenous factors are non-local, and originate from beyond what actually occurs within the endogenous situation; and obviously, externally-driven new technology and innovation that comes with knowledge will impact upon a firm and its environment. Inevitably, the surge in high tech and management knowledge introduced to developing countries is apparent as efforts are made to fit with global standards and with new quality-conscious tourists, who increasingly behave in an environmentally friendly manner (Zorpas, 2010).

These innovations are expected to deliver sustainability and one of the emerging environmental innovations is the idea of environmental scheme (see section 2.6). It is anticipated that environmental schemes would set the standard for business users and the new knowledge would deliver equal understanding. For instance, the 'We care' programme was developed by the Hilton International Hotel group, which operates in hotel businesses worldwide (Bohdanowicz, Zientara, and Novotna, 2011). Hilton hotels, which are located widely around the world, must comply with this programme similarly. This exemplifies the exogenous knowledge in many destinations and the staff that is local must comply with those operating procedures. To some extent, environmental schemes are different in criteria and vary considerably by user, such as hotel businesses, restaurants, and tourism operators.

So, exogenous factors are manifested through environmental schemes, management knowledge, and service processes such as quality control, product improvement (Pikkemaat & Peters, 2005), telecommunication technologies, rooms and maintenance, and savings in utilities, cleaning and laundry services (Mansells, 2011; Martinez-Ros & Orfila-Sintes, 2009). Accommodation businesses require a lot of controllable equipment and rely on knowledge and innovation. For example, key cards that control energy saving in a hotel room need to be kept in a proper dry area and require regular check-ups and maintenance.

However, knowledge management and knowledge transfer are problematic to study in different geographical areas, as destination users (the endogenous community) are not the producers of such innovations, which come from exogenous sources. Therefore, knowing how the instrument works effectively (or not) is as crucial as investing in human resources. Sandvik *et al.*, (2014) studied innovation and profitability in Norwegian hotel businesses, and they found that to be able to gain profitability, in terms of managerial implications, hotel managers should encourage innovation in their organisation, starting by influencing their organisational culture. It is important to human resource management to be able to get staff to understand innovative activities, as market offerings of hotels are almost purely service-based.

To some extent, competitive advantage (Molina-Azorín, J.F *et al.*, 2015) and societal changes e.g. environmental awareness are the major motivation for the implementation of technological instruments in business. Zeng *et al.*, (2011) argues that many large hotel businesses are motivated by market, social and government forces, particularly in sites of high-level pollution. Zeng and his friends found lower levels of implementation in SMEs. Moreover, knowledge management is particularly relevant for hotel chains in terms of their requirement for consistency in quality standards of their geographically dispersed hotels (Antonia-Hallin & Marnburg, 2008).

Marinez-Ros and Orfila-Sintes (2009) investigated the characteristics of accommodation businesses undertaking innovative activities. They found that the main determinants of innovation are the forms of hotel management, the hotel market strategy, and the size

and location of the hotel. Considering hotel size itself, the size of a firm plays a role in this relationship, as the relationship between advanced environmental strategies and exports gets stronger with any increase in the size of SMHs (Martin-Tapia *et al.*, 2010). Significantly, this could lead to differentiation of innovation. However, there are multiple aspects as SMHs found difficulties in converting exogenous knowledge into improved operational efficiency. This is especially the case when it is recalled that SMEs are not necessarily motivated by profitability as the major purpose of running a business (Carlsen *et al.*, 2010). Input of exogenous technology and Western-type motivation (i.e. profit as the major reason for running a business) has much larger implications for large-scale companies. However, it could be different when implementing with SMHs.

Environmental innovation is seemingly achieved by good practice in human resource management and collaboration by staff and managers, with government support. Even so, still very little is found on SMEs (Chen, 2011). On the other hand, innovation can emerge from various interactions between tourism stakeholders. Locally, tourism acts as a link to new markets and as an arena for knowledge exchange (Brouder, 2012). At present, it is difficult to separate out the interaction between the local and outsider (endogenous and exogenous factors); this interaction could possibly generate knowledge, cultural movement and other outcomes. However, where exogenous factors act as interventions (technological, social, managerial etc.), then the local outcome will be different. This is especially the case where, for example, creative outposts (Brouder, 2012) are characterised by their relative isolation from the core and from other rural communities, but also by their relative cooperation and fruitful local interaction (Brouder, 2012).

Environmental innovation from different stakeholders can deliver various outcomes, though it is recognised that cost reduction is a direct business benefit (Dief & Font, 2012; Gu *et al.*, 2009). Small and medium-sized businesses in particular were not motivated simply by business opportunities or cost reduction as a core rationale for being in business (Chen & Yang, 2014; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011). Every country has its own cultural perspective, rooted in traditions, lifestyle and attitudes. Moreover, competitive advantage will not be undermined when customers are environmentally oriented, and

willing to pay for environmentally friendly services and products (Nickerson et al., 2011). However, there is, as yet, uncertainty that every traveller is happy to pay extra; this may be true for environment-oriented tourists, but not general travellers (Andereck, 2009). Lagos and Curtis (2004) studied Greek tourism, which attempted to adopt sustainability via a bottom-up approach in response to the development limits of mass tourism. Their study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of a total quality strategy as a tool for promoting the endogenous tourism development goal; these are 'bottom-up approach' and activating 'development culture' in order to establish social consensus that involves all actors, which is adapted appropriately to the particularities of the local development process, under the appropriate conditions.

Their results suggest that cost reduction has been exhausted, as the country needs to boost growth and employment. Therefore, to develop a quality strategy for locals, they must input local resources and local knowledge into the new approach. Moreover, this study highlights a preference for product development and innovation to take place locally (i.e. an endogenous approach). Any development of technology and innovation of a local character are likely to be easier to scale up and incorporate in the local tourism value chain. Thus, it can be seen that local cultural traditions are important, and that innovation needs to be more specific to, and rooted in, location.

Labour costs are difficult to reduce since the economies and ways of working (and for tourism, service level expectations) in many developing countries are based on high levels of labour. The adoption of new innovation is linked to increased investment in the company. However, the endogenous reaction towards so-called environmental innovation would also depend on factors such as business size, location, motivation and management (Martinez-Ros & Orfila-Sintes, 2009). Also indigenous knowledge is the basic component of any country's knowledge system, encompassing the skills, experiences and insights of people, applied to maintain or improve their livelihood. Endogenous knowledge has become more significant, as sustainable development should emerge

from, and be guided by, the needs of each society, rather than being imposed or implemented exogenously: in other words, “people-centred” (Sharpley, 2009: 42).

2.6 Emergence of Environmental Schemes

Voluntary environmental initiatives are the focus of this study; therefore, it must be clearly shown that some kinds of voluntary programme exist, as follows.

Ayuso (2007) classified voluntary environmental instruments into five categories. These are:

1. **Codes of conduct**... public statements that aim to show commitment to basic principles of environmentally sound and sustainable company performance;
2. **Environmental practices**... action measures to improve the environmental performance of the company (for example, Green Globe programme);
3. **Ecolabels and awards**... tools to ensure the environmental performance of the company with regard to certain aspects, and to offer the corresponding information to the consumer;
4. **Environmental management systems (EMSs)**... tools to manage the environmental performance of the company and improve it continuously according to plan and strategy;
5. **Environmental performance indicators**... tools to assess and communicate the environmental performance of the company.

Briefly, voluntary environmental initiatives conducted in Thailand are manifested through four modes:

1. A code of conduct is the easiest environmental programme, introduced by a number of organisations in Thailand, e.g. ‘Green Accommodation’ by the Geographic Information System Department.
2. Environmental practices are known under ‘Green Globe’, a label with worldwide recognition. Others (e.g. those introduced by Dusit Hotels and Resorts, and Royal Princess Hotels and Resorts, jointly with the Tourism Authority of Thailand) have

produced an environmental best practice guide called *Environmental Management for Hotels: A Hotel Guide for Best Practices in Thailand* with assistance from the British government. This guide is an excellent resource for the hotels in Thailand as a starting point in their efforts to go green.

3. Ecolabels and related awards include the 'Green Leaf', produced by the Thai Hotel Association (THA) and the Tourism Authority of Thailand with other organisations, which is awarded for accommodation businesses that meet their criteria.
4. The environmental management system (EMS), known as ISO14001, was started in 2006.

However, hotel companies seem to be fairly weak in adopting such labels, due to the number of criteria and external and internal monitoring required (Chan, 2008). There are many more obvious evidences indicating the low level of successful programme. (Priego, Najera and Font, 2011; Mihalic *et al.*, 2011; Frey and George, 2010; Dief & Font, 2010; Gu, Ryan & Chon, 2009; Wan Yim Kin Penny, 2007). The need to educate staff and build audit capacity is a major problem. As a result, firms adopting EMSs are typically large in size and so can support the capital investment and cost of environmental development. Dief and Font (2012) studied hotel firms in the Red Sea region of Egypt in order to find out what motivated firms to adopt environmental management practices. Their findings showed that EMS is more likely to be conducted by a hotel chain with a star rating. Moreover, size matters in explaining hotels' environmentally friendly management performance. Hotel affiliation and star ratings are the territory of large firms with ready access to investment funds and technical expertise. Thus, EMSs typically suit large international businesses from where the system originally emerged, but EMSs are seemingly not yet suitable for local SMHs (Dief & Font, 2010).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has laid out a history and argument that help develop a nuanced sense of development evolution, including the tourism industry and development, and the

implication of an exogenous approach called environmental innovativeness. It did this by exploring the literature, around the terms 'Third World' and 'the Global South.' It found such classifications to be based on economic comparison in relation to the West, or the Global North. Since the post-war era, when economic goals were a focus known as modernization and industrialisation, development has been considered as a 'good' change. Tourism was also introduced as a growth pillar for this development paradigm.

Growth was significant in the East Asia/Pacific region. However, modernization was critiqued, as developing countries were dependent on developed countries. Tourism became mass tourism and required high investment with foreign capital, as well as financial benefits and political benefits from political centres rather than local resources.

The alternative development paradigm emerged during the 1970s and 1980s, focused on the local scale and cultural aspects in searching for a decent approach to development, along with using moderate methods and appropriate technology. Alternative development (also known as sustainable development) understands particularity: that development should be specific, understanding differences in area context, such as the Buddhist system. In other words, particularity is perceived as having a different worldview: the perceived values, belief systems and ways of life that lead to distinctive knowledge management.

The literature explored above suggests that exogenous influence is considered to be a product of Western technology and knowledge, which has been introduced to Eastern countries or developing countries in terms of environmental management schemes. As argued above, innovation divides into four modes: 1) product innovation; 2) classical process innovation; 3) process innovation in information handling; and 4) management innovation. However, innovation is not necessarily related to high tech, which is external, but can be about integrating existing local knowledge to guide environmental management. Using local knowledge in specific areas fulfils the function of particularity (this term is explained more fully in chapter 6) and sustainable development, which considers different contexts, is an exogenous factor for developing countries, especially knowledge of environmental management and innovation. Therefore, new technology

that comes with knowledge will impact upon firms. This environmental innovation has the capacity to act as a sustainable development tool. Hotel businesses also require significant amounts of technical control equipment and rely on knowledge and innovation. Knowledge transfer and management become more problematic when looking at different cultural contexts. More importantly, staff need education, training, and awareness training. Large hotels or international chains can transfer knowledge easily as they have the benefit of size and large budgets, while smaller hotels or those independent of chains may find this more difficult.

Environmental schemes used are categorised into the following groups: 1) Codes of conduct: the basic voluntary programme; 2) Environmental practices; 3) Ecolabels and awards: programmes that require evaluation from external inspectors to ensure that businesses conduct the environmental programme appropriately, reaching certain standards to gain customer recognition; 4) Environmental management systems (EMSs): standard systems set up for continuous improvement; and 5) Environmental performance indicators, tools to evaluate and respond to environmental performance in a company.

In Thailand, there are many voluntary environmental practices introduced for hotel business, such as Green Leaf, Green Accommodation and ISO14001. However, as the literature suggests, there are some obstacles, e.g. hotel size, staff and hotel motivation that decrease the efficiency of environmental management completion. The motivations for the hotel sector include cost saving and attracting environmentally oriented customers. The argument about whether all customers are interested in environmentally friendly products is on-going.

Consequently, tourist behaviour towards green products or environmentally friendly businesses cannot be taken as a clear indication that their attitude can be transferred into behaviours. However, some studies indicate that tourists prefer their freedom to choose environmentally friendly goods and they do not want to compromise e.g. studied by Santana-Jimenez and Hernandez (2011) found that tourists generally focus on their own

activities and experience while traveling and give less consideration to the local environment.

This could be some latent factor that leads to different preferences, e.g. background, individual intention of purchasing a green product. Additionally, price is their first priority. They would not pay extra for goods claiming to be green products (Hultman et al., 2015; Kasim, 2004; Lita R.P. et al., 2014) and tourist orientation and behaviour is unpredictable (Kostakis and Sardianou, 2013; Szymanska, 2013).

It has shown that current interest of development in developing countries in particular, is focused on the 'development from within' that is local scale, local need and local participation. In other words, the endogenous approach has its implication of 'bottom-up' methodology. The opposite of endogenous that always inherently comes with it is the exogenous, which is external. These two terms have been raising interest as the exogenous approach is exemplified by environmental innovation, e.g. high-tech energy-saving equipment. The environmental technology is invented in order to secure future resources, as environmental problems have been raising problems since the past. Consequently, environmental issues have been used as the condition which the new emerging alternative development paradigm should solve. Invention of high-tech environmental equipment is the spontaneous outcome for global agencies. Meanwhile, the 'bottom-up' approach is concerned with and more conceived from local knowledge. Additionally, the importance of cultural and social context is currently more perceived when implementing change with exogenous environmental technology. The expected outcome from this intervention of innovativeness could be unpredictable. This is because past development paradigms have not overcome the different cultural and social aspects that made these different outcomes. Therefore, since the focus is cultural and social contexts, it is necessary to explore cultural and social perspectives in terms of understanding the area of study.

Moreover, in the context of SMEs and SMHs, they are different in operation in comparison to general large business, e.g. number of employees, short operation control.

Interestingly, their motivation seems unlike other large businesses, even though profit is important. These many aspects of SME and SMH characteristics are discussed in the next chapter, followed by chapter 4 on the culture and social context of Thailand.

Chapter 3:

Owners/Managers' Decision-making and Motivations

3.1 Introduction

Chapter two illustrated the context of developing countries and traced development theory from the Second World War to the era of the sustainable development paradigm, with the central idea that the West has contributed significantly to global institutions and produced knowledge that would (it was thought) fit any country. The alternative paradigm has emphasised the importance of difference or 'particularity', in terms of understanding the difference made by economic development status and cultural context. Meanwhile, the on-going process of using new (Western) knowledge and technology to help sustain resources has changed the situation again. This knowledge and technology we called the exogenous influences, and one of these, environmental schemes, has emerged in recent times, is a tool thought by the West to be applicable. As a result of environmental problem worldwide, environmental technological innovations have been introduced regardless difference of cultural and social context (reviewed in chapter 2). Even accommodation firms are asked to incorporate environmental practices into their business operations.

This chapter examines the general motivation for implementing environmental schemes in hotels, the uncertainty and complexity of tourist attitudes, owner/managers' decision-making, organisational culture within SMHs, implementing environmental schemes in SMHs, and finally exploring the motivations of SMEs and SMHs, which will identify unconventional driving factors for SMHs when running businesses. The chapter ends with the role of government in legal environmental actions.

3.2 General Hotel Motivation towards Environmental Performance

The commitment of businesses to following green practices seems to vary, depending on location, target market/tourist, and company size (Molina-Azorin *et al.*, 2009; Rahman *and* Post, 2012). Interestingly, benefits arising for companies from environmental management systems (EMS) include cost savings, improved margins and corporate governance. Legislation could lead hotels to fully conduct an environmental programme (Chan & Wong, 2006). Therefore, cost savings may be motivating hotel managers to engage in environmental action (Meade & Pringle, 2001), through reductions in the use of fuel and water (Best & Thapa, 2011; Goodwin, 2011; Hess *et al.*, 2002). However, the fact is that improving the ability to take customers away from competitors depends upon tourists' attitudes, while cost reduction is directly to the businesses' advantage (Dief & Font, 2012). For example, Hilton International Group has been a pioneer in environmental development, saving nearly \$2.5 million in energy costs in the year 2000. Hilton's sustainability initiative 'We care' in 2006 resulted in saving more than \$9 million in two years (Peršić-Živadinov, 2009).

A number of practitioners have argued that the initial motivation emerged from consumer interest in environmentally friendly initiatives (Kang *et al.*, 2012; Han, Hsu & Lee, 2009; Lopez-Gamero *et al.*, 2009). However, there are still arguments with respect to different areas, target tourists and business positioning in a competitive market, which possibly influence organisational behaviour towards green-oriented operations. In other words, operationalizing environmental concerns must be beneficial to the organisation. Having said that, it is also a cost-cutting exercise, which benefits the firm regardless (Dief & Font, 2012; Gu *et al.*, 2009). It is universally acknowledged that many ecolabels, green practices, awards and environmental management systems (EMSs) enable cost reduction within environmentally oriented businesses. Moreover, levels of success and changes in regular expenses (especially utilities) throughout the business operations can be clearly measured. It is likely the most convincing factor for firms to start implementing green practices. Similarly, Gu *et al.* (2009) studied EMSs in hospitality businesses, and found that

environmental initiatives in the hotel sector will be employed where cost advantages are perceived. Thus, it can be seen that environmental actions that lead to cost-cutting benefit the entrepreneur, even though they might perceive that investing in environmental programmes is a non-recoverable cost. This might give some explanation to the limited action on the part of tourism operators. Additionally, Chen (2015) surveyed stakeholder's attitudes towards sustainable tourism management by conducting a study with tourists, entrepreneurs and local residents in a small city in Finnmark County, Norway. He found significant results that the tourism operators had the least interest in the agenda of environmental protection among the three groups of stakeholders. Even these three groups (residents, tourists, and tourism operators) are likely to be influenced by environmental issues as the changing trends in tourism. Changing the business operations to promote sustainable practice will add additional cost and complication to operations (Chan, 2008), and will create uncertainty in attracting the tourist who is unwilling to pay for higher costs attributed to the practice of sustainable management (Costarelli & Colloca, 2004).

Tourists' attitudes to environmentally friendly products will be discussed in the following section.

3.3 Uncertainty and Complexity Regarding Tourist Attitudes

To some extent, environmental management measures and ecolabels have emerged as a consequence of an increase in tourists' environmental awareness and their willingness to pay for conserving nature and environmentally friendly products (Dodds *et al.*, 2012; Hultman *et al.*, 2015; Kang *et al.*, 2013; Lita R.P *et al.*, 2014; Parsa *et al.*, 2015; Zorpas, 2010). According to Zorpas (2010), tourists prefer to behave responsibly by purchasing green products and services; once they realize how important nature and the environment are, they become more environmentally friendly (Cheng *et al.*, 2013; Nickerson *et al.*, 2016). However, other studies claim that there is little evidence of consumers with green intentions leading to changes in the actual behaviour of tourists in considering the environmental practices of businesses (Bergin-Seers & Mair, 2009). For example, Sharpley

(2001) differentiated green consumers from green tourists, stating that green consumers have concerns about environmental aspects, but widespread awareness of environmental issues cannot be translated into an increase in the numbers of green tourists as there is a lack of evidence of consumers transferring environmental attention into real actions.

Despite increasing consumer awareness, there is evidence that consumers do not always consume according to green values or principles. For example, Nawijin and Peters (2010), who examined tourist satisfaction with 'involuntary green travel' by the intervention of government regulations, argue that the strongest determinant of tourists' happiness is freedom in choosing a destination; any policy measures that affect tourists' freedom in activities will negatively affect tourists' satisfaction. Tourists do not necessarily want to compromise their comfort by using local non-packaged goods or public transportation. Thus, implementing green policies that satisfy tourists can be difficult for firms.

Environmental values are likely to be of little influence in the buyers' decision-making process. Can *et al.*'s (2014) study on tourist preferences when choosing accommodation revealed that, even though tourists define themselves as environmentally friendly, the presence of a green rating system in a hotel is not a major factor in their final choice. Consumers have different motivations and backgrounds; moreover, there are many latent factors in the purchasing decision-making process, e.g. environmental value (Costarelli & Colloca, 2014; Latif, 2012), attitude (Kaiser *et al.*, 2007), past behaviour and intentions (Carrus *et al.*, 2008).

Moreover, guests prepared to pay extra for eco-friendly facilities may be unsure whether they would have similar service and are not merely helping service providers save on their energy costs (although not all guests have to pay for extra energy-saving products used in accommodation). Tourists are price-sensitive. Similarly, Kasim's (2004) study of tourist preferences for environmentally and socially friendly hotel attributes in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, found that the majority of tourists choose a hotel based on price, service quality and the hotel's physical attractiveness, rather than environmental and social performance. In addition, there is no distinction between foreign and domestic tourists

with regard to environmental aspects. Though they may have more or less awareness, price is the first priority in the decision-making process for tourists. Essentially, tourists identifying themselves as green consumers are vague, and there is a lack of precise numbers for green tourists. Moreover, even if they identify their behaviour as green-oriented, they may not understand sustainable tourism (Szymanska, 2013). Therefore, to invest in environmental management with regard to the cost of energy-controlled installations is worth doing regardless of increasing the number of environmentally oriented tourists, because tourists' attitudes are unpredictable, particularly their behaviour and concern for environmental products.

Many studies found contradictions in tourists' awareness, behaviour, and final consumer decisions. This clearly indicates that more studies are needed. The level of ecological awareness of sustainability problems is of great importance in determining strategies to be developed and adopted by firms seeking to change organisation behaviour (Dief & Font, 2010; Tilley, 1999).

By looking at tourists' attitudes, it can be said that tourists' attention is an uncontrollable factor in driving hotels to become greener. This is particularly the case for small and medium-sized businesses, where owner/ managers navigate operational direction. The next section discusses the business side by emphasising owner/ managers' attitudes to environmental practices.

3.4 Owner-Manager Decision-making

Generally SME's business decision-making is done by owner/ managers and tends to be characterised by their management style and personality (Ateljevic, 2006; Carson & Cromie, 1989; see also Moriaty et al, 2008, Morrisson 1996). This is supported by Frey and George (2010), who investigated the barriers between business owners' attitudes and environmental behaviour. They found that willingness of tourism managers to commit resources to clean management practices is based on a positive attitude towards responsible tourism management, but such attitudes did not necessarily lead to

management change. As Dief and Font (2010) observe, a lack of appropriate frameworks stands between good intentions and actual behaviour, particularly in small, domestic firms. Ayuso's (2007) study of managers' voluntary instruments for sustainable tourism found that a number of hotel managers considered their individual environmental awareness as the main reason behind the adoption of environmental practice. Gaps between behaviour and attitude can be caused by many factors, such as government support, increasing tourist demand for green initiatives and environmental programmes initiated by government policy (Kilipirisa & Zarvada, 2012).

In other words, owner/ managers in SME hotels are, unsurprisingly, the dominant influence on the business. According to Font et al.,(2014) investigated 900 tourism companies in 57 European protected areas shows that small firms are more environmentally friendly business than early expected, especially, the small firms called 'lifestyle' business, whose motivation is from owner. Although there are still some arguments about attitude and performance gaps. Particularly, SMEs in tourism, family basically runs company on their own. Manager/owner attitude is consequently significant related. Study manager and owner attitude toward enterprise performance has linked with specific interest; many studies explored attitude and environmental practices in business. (Smerecnik and Andersen, 2012; Wan Yim Kin Penny, 2007; Erdogan and Baris, 2006; Mensah, 2007; Park and Boo, 2012; Su, 2007). For example, Wan (2007) studied managers' attitudes toward environmental management as facilities management tool in the Macao hotel sector. The research reveals that the hotel managers do not recognize the significances of environmental management on hotel effectiveness and competitiveness. Similarly, Merke and Wocke (2006) investigated the South African hotel industry and found that the highest percentage of responding hotels did not use responsible tourism as part of their marketing strategy. Overall, only two per cent of worldwide tourism companies have participated in environmentally friendly schemes (Frey and George, 2010). However, while good intentions lead to the possibility of good performance, it cannot be denied that good performance is the result of strong commitment to environmental concerns. Thus, this study of managers' attitudes to

environmental management should be contextualised within the SME business environment.

Environmentally friendly behaviour can also be discussed from the perspective of human characteristics. McCarty and Shrum's (2001 see Latif *et al.*, 2012) study on the relationship between value orientation and recycling behaviour suggested that inconvenience was the key factor for predicting the recycling behaviour of people who were more individualistic or had a lower economic status. For people who had collectivistic value orientation whereby sharing, duties, and obligations were strongly valued, or for people who had more internal locus of control, beliefs about the importance of recycling were positively related to the tendency to recycle (p.990). Thus, individual-level study offers the best explanation of the awareness gap; community-level study may also offer a solution, as social level assumes that people observe how others around them act and use the information as a guideline for their own behaviour (Lorenzoni *et al.*, 2007). Thus people tend to 'read' the dominant social norms and use them as verification and support for their own behaviour. This could reflect a collective society, in that people do not want to be different; they therefore look at other people or firms in the same social space.

Business owner/ managers are responsible for business units, especially in SMEs, which have different characteristics from large business, and so understanding the organisational culture and characteristics of SMEs is needed, and will be further explored in the next section.

3.5 Organisational Culture within Small and Medium-sized Hotels

The characteristics of SMHs are directly related to the successful initiation of environmental practices. In SMHs, it is not essential to maintain formalised organisation and management structures. In small tourism businesses, ownership interest, management and day-to-day operations rest with one or two people (Ateljevic, 2007). A small number of staff does not require a structured working environment. SMH characteristics are considered to include shorter lines of communication and closer interaction within the SME, management flexibility, and the relationship of such

strategies to SMH performance (Aragon-Correa *et al.*, 2008). Additionally, Ateljevic's (2007) study of critical issues in small tourism firms found that owner/ managers are generally more concerned with individual personalities and the ability to develop and foster a 'homelike' atmosphere when recruiting new staff. They are concerned more with relationships with staff, regardless of experience or personal skill in certain positions; this also leads to good staff loyalty/reliability. Hotel owners/managers see the importance of human resources systems, but do not give it much attention (Young-Thelin & Boluk, 2013). As environmental concerns are of key significance in allocating resources in the accommodation businesses, small hotel firms tend to put the responsibility of environmental action onto others (Tzschentke *et al.*, 2008).

Lack of environmental and sustainability knowledge among staff is also considered a barrier to progress, even among employees of large hotel firms. Staff are likely to implement green practices if they are encouraged to do so. Chan *et al.*'s (2014) investigation on ecological behaviour and intention to implement green practices of hotel employees found three determinants of environmental triggers: environmental knowledge; environmental awareness, and environmental concern. Chan's findings show that the determinants are correlated; employees are likely to implement green programmes through their ecological behaviour. Chan *et al.* (2014) study of employees in large hotels in Hong Kong showed that environmental knowledge influences hotel staffs' green behaviour by enhancing awareness and concern about the environment once hotel staff are educated about this environmental issue. The study also argued for training to equip employees with up-to-date knowledge and to raise their environmental awareness. However, since SME hotel owner/ managers tend not to pay attention to human resource training/ educating as they employ only a few staff (Moriarty *et al.*, 2008) and this has made managers overlook environmental practice training. Consequently, it is more difficult to achieve environmental initiatives.

As SMHs typically have only a small number of staff and are limited in scope, they may not have the human or financial capacity to invest in high-tech solutions for environmental mitigation. Technology delivers energy savings, as energy and technical advances have

been placed high on the sustainable action agenda (Font & Harris, 2004; Bergos-Jamenez *et al.*, 2002). The expense of initial environmental installation means it is mostly larger hotel businesses that employ effective environmental practices. Expensive environmental audits will cause financial difficulties for small businesses as they have different operational constraints. Simpatico *et al.* (2012) explained why small tourism businesses do not pay much attention to EMS: firstly, low level-awareness and poor eco-literacy; secondly, the suitability of an EMS for adoption by small businesses; and finally, a lack of access to expertise and financial support. An EMS needs significant effort; SMEs do not have sophisticated management, and are generally unable to easily implement systematic environmental practices. Environmental practice would create imbalance in an SME in terms of expense and specialist staff. In fact, SME operation is primarily a controlled-budget operation. Basically, firms must operate business under profit-loss management; to be able to survive in the business, even revenue is important regardless of personal intention of investing in the business. As a firm's primary objective is to make a profit, any non-core-cost activity may decrease profitability. SMEs operate under severe financial and human resource constraints (Moriarty *et al.*, 2008). Mihalic *et al.* (2011) found that Slovenian hotels firms consider sustainable practices to be costly, and consequently, sustainable actions are at a low level. Therefore, proactive environmental practices tend to be present in international hotel chains that are able to understand international up-to-date environmental issues, rather than in firms that are single-owner local operations (Claver-Cortes *et al.*, 2009).

3.6 Implementing Environmental Schemes in Small and Medium-sized Hotels

The literature demonstrated that hotel businesses employing effective environmental practices tend to be large and international, with financial and technological back-up. However, the majority of tourism enterprises are SMEs, which consume relatively small amounts of energy (Goodwin, 2011). However, SMEs taken as a group have a considerable impact on global resources (Kirk, 1995; Goodwin, 2011). However, accessing and

implementing various forms of EMS programmes will be limited through financial difficulties, operational constraints, and knowledge gaps. Kasim (2009) found that actions SMEs could conduct were basic common sense energy-saving measures. The literature clearly indicates that SMEs face many challenges to implement environmental practices (EMS in particular). However, if hotels do become environmentally friendly businesses, they can often only implement partial programmes that reduce their expense, rather than full environmental programmes, such as EMS. According to Ayuso (2007), the obstacles of cost and complexity of implementing environmental initiatives such as EMSs by the International Hotels Environment Initiative (IHEI) and Green Globe led each hotel to adapt the environmental programme to their own particular budget situation, using manuals and guidebooks that were free and accessible. However, the cost of joining the programme fully would still be difficult for these hotels.

Conducting current environmental certification in small and medium-sized businesses is not appropriate in every geographical location. Particular contexts have their own problems. Additionally, if environmental standards are set for worldwide users, it will, then, have a smaller result due to geographical differences. Again, Goodwin (2011) stated that issues vary in importance from place to place; local authorities and local stakeholders need to take a lead in setting their own priorities, and not adopting a 'one size fits all' approach. This marks a huge change in current environmental initiatives, as now sustainable tourism favours a diversity of solutions depending on geographical context. Hence, based on the sustainable tourism principle, global certification would be meaningless. This has become a major concern, as particular locations have their own priorities. Therefore, the present study of hotel SMEs may shed some light on environmental management practices.

3.7 General Perspective on SMHs' Motivations

The literature review of motivation has focused on SMEs, especially small and micro enterprises that dominate the hospitality sector of developing countries (Change, 2011). The focus on SMEs is studied widely relative to other specific areas and dependent on the

study interests of scholars; very few studies have investigated motivation in the context of understanding the cultural background of SMEs. With regard to such research in the tourism sector, a number of researchers found unconventional motivations within SMEs, which were distinctive. For example, SME entrepreneurs were motivated by non-economic factors. Motivations to start running a business appear mainly to come from socio-psychological factors (Akbaba, 2012; Chen and Yang, 2014, Shane *et al.*, 1991). Aramand (2014) argued that motivation can be categorised as the need for power, the need for affiliation and the need to achieve. For example, the Mongolian women in Aramand's study were motivated primarily by a need to achieve, despite having social and psychological barriers to overcome. The majority of scholars have paid attention to 'push' and 'pull' factors (Jaafar *et al.*, 2011; Chan & Quah, 2012), which was first suggested by Dann (1977 in Ahmad *et al.*, 2014). Push factors are linked to negative emotions or experiences, e.g. unemployment, unsatisfactory work conditions. Pull factors are more positive, e.g. the need for approval, being one's own boss, or the need to balance family and work. Thus, pull factors tend to be more external, situational and cognitive as compared to push motivations (p.33). It is clear from the literature that finance is not the only factor that drives people to start SMEs; social and cultural factors are also very important.

Non-financial motivations are the main reason for owning a firm and most SMEs are owned and controlled by one family (Benzing *et al.*, 2005; Chu *et al.*, 2007; Swierczek & Ha, 2003). Moreover, family-owned businesses play significant roles in service activity and creativity (Change, 2011). A study of enterprises in Bulgaria (Fletcher *et al.*, 2009) found that almost half the respondents were second-generation business owners. However, according to Chan and Quah (2012), these people are engaged in their parents' business for family and non-economic reasons, the most important of which is to continue their family enterprise. Secondly, they expressed pride in the values exemplified by the family business; and lastly, the business was thought to be contributing intrinsic value to society.

It can also be seen that continuity, and a commitment to allowing the next generation to run the business and to ensure the future employment of their children are important to SMEs. This has implications for the size of a business and future plans for expansion; Chan and Quah (2012) speculated that there was a desire to keep within the boundary or capability of the family, which may imply keeping to a familiar and reliable business size.

3.8 Lifestyle SME Characteristics

Although the present study is not focused on 'lifestyle businesses', there are some shared characteristics that are worth examining. Holmes and Zimmer's (1994) study of motivation for growth- or non-growth-oriented owners revealed different approaches towards everyday operations. A growth-oriented business is active and market-focused, while the non-growth-oriented firm was recognised as a 'lifestyle business', as it is not motivated by financial attitudes (Getz & Carlsen, 2005) but searching for happiness; money is less significant. Living in the area, being their own boss and doing interesting work characterise lifestyle entrepreneurs; moreover, they also wish to maintain and develop within their availability of capita, e.g. availability of land, taking advantage of a business opportunity that suddenly arose (Akbaba, 2012; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011).

Thus, the lifestyle entrepreneurs can be characterised as wanting to be their own boss, wanting to be independent, and doing interesting work (Chen & Yang, 2014; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011).

Figure 2.1: Lifestyle firms, family entrepreneurs and characteristics of SMEs

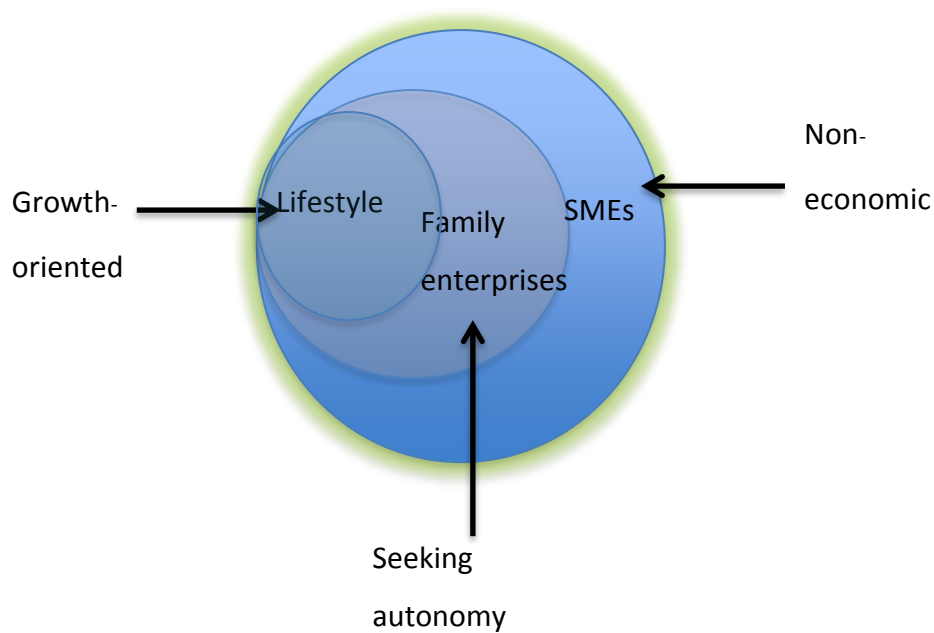


Figure 2.1 illustrates these characteristics: a family entrepreneur may, in some respects, also be termed a 'lifestyle business', because a majority of family businesses are predominantly recognised for having lifestyle- and autonomy-related goals (Thomas *et al.*, 2005).

It can be seen that there is a confluence of SMEs, family, lifestyle and non-growth businesses with non-economic-oriented entrepreneurs. These are:

1. In a family firm, jobs are secured for family members (Holmes & Zimmers, 1994);
2. Lifestyle businesses are motivated mostly by non-economic factors (Thomas *et al.*, 2011);
3. There is an emphasis on relationships in family firms and non-growth businesses. The non-growth entrepreneurs consider relationships rather than economics (Holmes & Zimmer, 1994);
4. Firms driven by non-economic motivations are considered to be operating with no direction or plan (Thomas *et al.*, 2011), and depend on owner attitude and often such firms do not have a management plan (Holmes & Zimmer, 1994).

Nonetheless, it is not certain that every SME firm and lifestyle business is non-growth-oriented. Evidence from the majority of studies mentioned above indicates that most of the SMEs share characteristics with lifestyle businesses with many of them being family-owned and operated with owner and manager being one and the same person (Khodov, 2003).

However, either a growth or no-growth entrepreneur can lead family businesses, whereas lifestyle firms tend to operate as no-growth family businesses. Additionally, family members who run the business as a manager can be the same person doing other activities in the company, such as laundry, housekeeper and so forth, and these are often called owner-operator firms (Getz & Carlsen, 2000).

Interestingly, in some cases, lifestyle businesses are not set up specifically in towns or cities, but more likely on the owners' land – even in rural peripheral areas (Banki & Ismail, 2015), because of limited access to capital. Such entrepreneurs typically start firms primarily through their own savings or with contributions from family members (Akbaba, 2012; Banki & Ismail, 2015; Mason, 1998). Morrisson (1996 in Jaafar *et al.*, 2001) argued that the tourism industry has a very high number of small hotels, and this is partly because of the low capital and lack of qualifications needed to start a business. Besides, demand is localized and very segmented, which also enables the entrepreneur to provide special services to a niche market.

Additionally, managers or owners are often navigating SMEs without any professional management skills; therefore, their background directly influences any 'management' that occurs. On a more positive note, this specific characteristic allows owner/managers to conduct flexible management, with shorter lines of communication, closer interaction within the firm, and a tighter relationship between strategies and performance (Aragon-Correa *et al.*, 2008).

3.9 Lifestyle Business Motivation

Lifestyle entrepreneur's motivation is highly visible in the tourism sector. It is obvious that social and personal satisfaction, i.e. autonomy-seeking (Getz & Petersan, 2005) and non-financial gains (Chen & Elston, 2013) are more important than the economic factors, even though the latter are an integral motivational part of any regular business that seeks financial viability and profit. Many studies revealed start-up motivations came from different cultural and personal factors (Eser *et al.*, 2012; Kresier *et al.*, 2010; Tsamenyi *et al.*, 2008; Yetim & Tetim, 2006). Some studies categorised owners' motivation as varying according to their stated purpose (for example, to understand environmental behaviour or growth orientation). Using different theories led to different categories, (for example, psychological theory, push-pull factor analysis) and suffers from the same limitations as attempting to categorise any individuals with a limited set of criteria (Thomas *et al.*, 2011). There have been some quantitative studies (Benzing *et al.*, 2005; Chu *et al.*, 2007; Swierczek & Ha, 2003) reviewed. Many studies paid attention to SME characteristics (Banki & Ismail, 2015) to find out their demographic background, such as education, job-related experience, gender, etc., expecting to find similar characters for any lifestyle entrepreneur. Nonetheless, Jaafar *et al.* (2011), who explored the characteristics of SMH owners/ managers in Malaysia, found inconsistencies about the educational level of the owners/ managers, the majority of respondents did not have experience related to their current accommodation businesses. A lack of understanding about the dynamics of those businesses within those categories is identified; this could be social interaction and cultural difference (Thomas *et al.*, 2011; Skokic & Morison, 2011). The motivation findings of previous studies are divided as follows.

3.9.1 Family happiness

Scholars have found *family* to be the most common motivation for SMEs operating without any relevant experience. Studies by Domeico (2005 in Thomas *et al.*, 2011) revealed that *values* routinely influence decision-making. That is, family responsibility is

the first consideration. Most business activities frequently involve other family members, and they often have to balance business and family interests (Thomas *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, responsibility for family does not mean just daily living, but the extent to which the mission of the founder is to pass their business on through their children. Similarly, Holmes and Zimmer (1994) revealed that no-growth businesses often employ family members, but also try to keep the business to a size that they can control. Owners have a strong relation with employees; for example, not making staff redundant, as they see them as 'family.' However, they will keep the number of staff to the minimum. Both sets of findings show that maintenance of relationships remains a significant influence in their management and operation (Aragon-Correa *et al.*, 2008).

Business founder/ owners were concerned about their children's future, and job security for their employees. It may be that they do not have the potential to expand their business, even if they wished to. Founders keep firms small in order to maintain control. Maximizing profitability becomes less significant than keeping family members in harmony and having sufficient income (Getz & Carlsen, 2000; Carlsen *et al.*, 2001). This approach gives security to the long-term viability of the firm, as noted by Fletcher *et al.* (2009): almost half of respondents were from two-generation businesses, more than one third from three-generation businesses. Similarly, Chu *et al.* (2007), who studied Kenyan and Ghanaian businesses using quantitative methods, found many owners employ family members more intensively in Ghana. Both were expected to create jobs for family members with their businesses.

Other studies also indicated that the family-driven factor strongly influenced participation in accommodation businesses (Ahmad *et al.*, 2014).

3.9.2 Social acceptance

Aramand (2014), Shane *et al.* (1991) and Ahmad *et al.* (2014) found that social acceptance is another factor in entrepreneur motivation. Entrepreneurial activity is seen as a path to

achieving a higher position in society and being respected by friends, and being one's own boss gives a sense of achievement. This was found in Vietnam, Kenya and Ghana (Chu *et al.*, 2007; Benzing *et al.*, 2005). Additionally, in developing countries such as China and Malaysia, governments are promoting positive ideas about wealth and social status to locals. Having independence in running a firm carries the prestige of being an owner.

3.9.3 Independence

The desire for independence, flexibility, and taking their own approach to business conduct is indicated in some studies. For example, Ahmad *et al.* (2014) saw independence as the second most important pull factor in Malaysian business owners of home-stay businesses. Similarly, Shane *et al.* (1991) reviewed start-up factors in Britain, New Zealand and Norway. They found independence in controlling their own time and flexibility of personal life, with freedom to conduct their own approach to business to be the main motivation factors. Evidence suggests, most importantly, that owners have their business to ease their lives at the beginning. Similar studies found family businesses in Australia were concerned with lifestyle enhancement and wanting to move or remain in a rural area, which can be seen as a lifestyle factor.

Most 'freedom' choices are influenced by experience. That person needs change from their current situation and is searching for individual pursuits. Merchant and Mortiar (2011) put additional emphasis on their sampler travel experience, which led them to develop their hobby into their lifestyle business. Moreover, travel also broadened their experience to see different services and facilities in many destinations. Experience of work in hotels was also found to influence the business owners' decision-making (Chan & Quah, 2012). Evidence suggests that experience guides the decision to start a business, yet such experiences do not necessarily include business management knowledge and skills when they run their enterprise (Jaafar *et al.*, 2011).

3.9.4 Availability of capital, land and opportunity

Available investment resources (e.g. land and buildings), a strategic location and an emerging business opportunity may allow a person to set up a business on their own property, which requires only a little additional investment capital to start the business. Lifestyle firms can easily respond to what they need on their own interest and on the availability of resources (Chan & Quah, 2012).

Living in one's own property and to delivering a countryside 'feel' to the guests is found in developed countries such as Canada, Denmark, Britain, New Zealand and Norway (Getz & Petersen, 2005; Shane *et al.*, 1991). These people have no obligation to looking after children since their children are usually grown up. Yet, many SMEs in developing countries are driven by a strong commitment to family responsibility coinciding with a readiness of land and capital. Therefore, an accommodation business seems to be the only business linked to lifestyle. The business entrepreneurs are also influenced by culture (Zhuplev & Shtykhno, 2009). Chen and Yang (2014), who studied Lifestyle-Oriented Small Tourism Firms (LOSTFs) in low collectivistic countries where people have independent thought, argue that such entrepreneurs live their own lives and they do not want to influence their children's future, unlike in collectivistic nations, in which family comes first. Parents in developing countries put their relationship and family into the hands of whomever is running the business and parents ensure their children future.

Evidence of national culture influences was found by Zhuplev and Shtykhno (2009). Their longitudinal survey of Russian SMEs between 1994 and 2008 revealed that making money had become the top motivation factor of Russian SMEs. They suggested that Russian entrepreneurial culture can be found in a "rugged, poorly regulated and governed type of capitalism" (p.40). They hope to improve their quality of life through wealth creation. Swierczek and Ha (2003) suggest that the difficult business environment in Vietnam (i.e. less support from government) forces Vietnamese entrepreneurs to look at short-term net profit, rather than long-term business growth. Unstable business circumstances lead to their short-term vision and they focus on survival first. It is said that the entrepreneurial

vision is reinforced by Vietnam's national culture (high collectivism and high affiliation). Therefore, businesses are governed and grounded by national culture and the environment they exist in.

3.13 Problems Resulting from Lifestyle Entrepreneur Performance

The unconventional return on investment approach that motivates SMEs (i.e. profit is not a priority) delivers desired family and lifestyle returns; but putting finance as a low priority also means that the matter of 'unsuccessful' businesses needs to be explored. As most SMEs are lifestyle enterprises, they tend to lack financial and management strategy at the beginning. Moreover, as Swierczek and Ha (2003) discovered, education and working experience have little advantage for SME start-ups. Businesses operating without a strategic plan would likely encounter various problems as a direct consequence.

Thomas *et al.* (2011) argue that a creative and knowledge-based workforce is often seen as limited in SMEs, especially in small businesses where its management function is simple. Moreover, further problems arise as suggested by Purateera *et al.* (2009), who argue that rapid changes in technology can affect a small business dramatically. The intention to develop human skill or knowledge is important, but the manager's background and the financial conditions are major factors in delivering additional skill to staff (Young-Thelin & Boluk, 2013). Many lifestyle firms were started using personal savings with evidence suggesting a tenuous but tangible link between running the business on a limited operational budget poor service delivery (Banki & Ismail, 2015; Mason, 1998).

On the other hand, limited budgets and resources tend to keep businesses to a size that is manageable (Jaafar *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, they did not target profit and growth; therefore, they are not interested in bringing in new technology, and may not necessarily see skill improvement as a priority for the business.

Gore (2005 in Thomas *et al.* 2011) suggests that organisational culture can help knowledge transfer, by helping identify key knowledge gaps, as national culture has influenced entrepreneur orientation, specifically in collective countries (Yetim & Yetim, 2006; Aramand, 2014), as collective attitude is dependent on group and social agreement. Additionally, SMEs are claimed to have stronger organisational culture by virtue of size and visibility of the owner-managers (Wilson & Bates, 2003). SMEs owner-managers directly navigate the firms. Owner-managers' attitude and perception (Hill *et al.*, 2008), experience and training influence organisational culture (Miladi, 2014). Thus, it is deniable to state that collective culture has direct influence on SMEs owner-managers attitude towards decision-making.

3.14 Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed the conventional motivations of SMEs and different driving factors for SMEs and SMHs. The chapter began with general hotel motivation towards environmental management. However, there are some obstacles (e.g. hotel size, staff and hotel motivation) that decrease the efficiency of environmental management. Hotel motivations are twofold, cost saving, and attracting the attention of customers who are environmentally oriented (though evidence suggested that the former is the dominant motivation). The argument as to whether customers are truly interested in environmentally friendly products is on-going with inconclusive and contradictory evidence.

Consequently, tourist behaviour towards green product or environmentally friendly businesses is somewhat complex, and more evidence is needed to prove that their environmental attitudes transfer to purchasing behaviours. Moreover, past studies indicate that tourists place their freedom to choose above environmentally friendly goods and do not want to compromise. This may be due to some latent factors that led to different preferences (e.g. background, personal attitude). Additionally, price is often their first priority when they decide which goods to purchase and it is unclear whether they will pay extra for goods claiming to be green products.

In SMHs, owner/ managers lead the business, and therefore, there are many studies about owner/ manager attitudes towards green practice. Firstly, as mentioned above, attitude and actual behaviour are not necessarily linked, though individual awareness is a common reason for implementing green practices. Secondly, the literature shows that poorer people tend to be less green-oriented, and that people concerned about their community are more interested in offering solutions.

In terms of organisational culture, one or two people are responsible for this in SMHs. The main features of SMH organisational culture are short lines of communication, flexible management, and the relationship of such strategies with SMH performance is close.

Consequently, In terms of staff, SMH owner/ managers are more concerned with staff feelings, a more 'homelike' atmosphere; relationships come before experience and personal skill. Therefore, they put environmental responsibility onto others.

While exogenous technological inputs, such as energy- saving systems, are able to deliver sustainable management solutions for large hotel firms, SMHs generally lack capacity to benefit from them. Moreover, SMHs are limited-budget operations: they would be reluctant to operationalize programmes if it affected profitability. In other words, SMHs would employ only partial environmental management programmes suitable for their situation; sustainable tourism favours a diversity of solutions, contextualised by geographical conditions.

Many studies found that motivation can be categorised into a need for affiliation, a need for achievement, and a need for power. Non-economic motivations are significant for SMHs, as they are normally owned and operated by family. To some extent, family purpose, e.g. contributing to family pride, is also recognised. In other words, SMEs are known as lifestyle businesses because they are driven by non-economic factors, characterised by wanting to be one's own boss, independence, and doing interesting work. In summary, studies tend to classify SMEs' motivation into four main areas: 1) family happiness; 2) social acceptance; 3) independence; and 4) availability of capital, land, and opportunity.

Lack of budget is a big problem for lifestyle entrepreneur performance in terms of environmental practice, as businesses mostly start up using personal savings. They keep the business to a size that matches their ability. Moreover, start-up is often based on instinct, regardless of whether they have sufficient knowledge. Their attitudes are influenced by social values and socio-cultural aspects. People's motivations for owning a business have been grounded in culture and valuing things that will vary between people in distinct geographical locations.

Chapter 4

Environmental exercise by the government

4.1 Conducting Environmental Practices by Government Agencies

It has been more than a decade since sustainable tourism was introduced to the global stage. The theoretical concept has been translated into management tools but whether it is really applicable and workable in the actual destination remains paradoxical. Sustainable development must be integrated with existing national strategic planning, an important factor influencing the ability of a country to achieve sustainable development (Soteriou & Coccossis, 2010; Tosun, 2001). Sustainable development is exogenous (Wongthong & Harvey, 2014). The importance of local government and national government taking action towards sustainable tourism has raised interest among scholars and there are number of studies exploring government roles in accordance with sustainable tourism (Carter *et al.*, 2015; Churugsa *et al.*, 2007, Connell *et al.*, 2009; Hatipoglu *et al.*, 2014; Godfrey, 1998; Qi *et al.*, 2008; Wang & Ap, 2013; Wongthong & Harvey, 2014).

Local implementation of Agenda 21 of sustainable tourism development places obligation on local authorities to embrace sustainable development within activities, policies and plans. As tourism relies heavily on natural and physical environment, local government is significantly responsible for incorporating sustainable development plans into practice with other stakeholders, such as businesses, non-profit-oriented organisations, and local communities. Moreover, local authorities also provide an existing and critical operational link between ministerial and legislative directives and

the varied components of the operating tourism industry (Dymond, 1997). Though sustainable tourism is focused on social, environment and economic dimensions. Social and environmental aspects are becoming more important, while a mere economic aspect is previously emphasised. However, moving attention towards social and environmental quality for long-term action is difficult. Soteriou and Coccossis (2010) studied national tourism organisations in European countries, and found that environmental sustainability seemed to be one of the most recognised facets. In line with global concerns, environmental problems are obviously tangible and taken into national policy in order to improve sustainability.

Environmental dimensions may have obvious impacts and are a clear indicator in evaluating and implementing sustainable planning. However, emerging global calls for environmental concerns with policy and planning are only just moving towards engagement of tourism with sustainability (Pini, 2009). In other words, sustainable tourism policy has gained policy traction, but lack of implementation remains an issue. While governments may have sustainable tourism policies, they may still focus on economic development and ignore social and environment aspects (Qin *et al.*, 2011). Tosun (2001) observes that prevailing socio-economic and political conditions make sustainable tourism development an enormously difficult task to achieve. In poorer developing countries foreign exchange earnings take priority, for example in Vietnam (Jansen-Verbeke & Go, 1995).

Consequently, tourism development could be sustainable or unsustainable as a country cannot deny the economic improvement dimension. Therefore, a country develops tourism according to its present situation and availability of resources. (Tosun, 2001). Mycoo's (2006) study of sustainable tourism in Barbados questioned whether it was being implemented or if it even existed at all. Mycoo found that even though Barbados has policies on sustainable tourism, it seemingly failed to translate policy into action. Though the government has policies, advanced environmental strategies have not been applied in appropriate areas, such as coastal areas where coral reef and grass beds are fragile. The strategy for sustainable tourism in Barbados is that the level of sewage

treatment is still basic. Barbados hotel businesses are not required for the Environmental Indicator Assessment (EIA). As the key weakness is that law does not require the EIA. Not only touristic islands like Barbados, but also developed countries like Australia (Pini, 2009) struggle to achieve environmental sustainability by integrating with local agenda/action. Translating sustainable tourism into action or whether sustainable tourism is integrated with local government plans is not a simple task (Logar, 2010). Pini's (2009) study, mentioned above, also found financial hardship made local governments engage with a short-term perspective. Economic reasons are the basic deficiency in developing sustainable tourism, e.g. Turkey (Tosun, 2001).

The notion of turning environmental policy into action has been problematic due to land-use planning. Zoning of different activities is a common first task that local government should be able to control (Mycoo, 2006; Godfrey, 1998; Tores-Delgado & Palomeque, 2014). Soteriou and Coccossis (2010) studied UK local government attitudes, and found the difficulty is that the community has occupied the area before land-use planning was launched. Therefore, to manage sustainably is relatively difficult, as sustainable management cannot be applied after the beginning of community settlement. Krutwayscho and Bramwell (2009) suggested in their study of social context in tourism policy planning in Phuket, Thailand that land-use planning and environmental controls may oppose policies and harm the local entrepreneurs' profits if focusing mainly on social and local needs. (Krutwayscho & Bramwell, 2009). Although land-use management is required for tourism sustainability, it often runs into difficulty as a result of conflicting objectives, vision, and organisational and management cultures of stakeholders, as well as in economic capacity, administrative inertia in government agencies (Vera *et al.*, 2011 in Tores-Delgado & Palomeque, 2014).

The environment is not the only issue at destinations, it is also related to building, infrastructure and sensitive physical environment. It needs to integrate, acknowledge local priorities and observe local administrative procedures of existing policy making and implementation. It can be concerned with how communities tolerate tourists (i.e. Mycoo's perception carrying capacity, 2006). Stakeholders are also involved with this

environmental policy, government alone cannot administrate and make it sustainable. Difficulty can be found in many developing countries such as China and Thailand. This is exemplified by the study of Chang *et al.* (2013), the studied government's engagement with environmental policy and its performance from polluting Chinese listed firms. Results reveal that with a weak policy enforcement mechanism, without economic/political pressure imposed on firms, regulation implementation is not likely to be as effective. Decentralization to regional governments truly reflect the attitude of regional governments, therefore, regional government should really be effectively implementing the legal action. Apart from regional government, the state government should really give more weight to enforcement. Lastly, increasing the value of environmental investment may help, e.g. providing more environmental subsidies to proactive firms.

Global institutions are working hard to push environmental commitment into national planning. The success of environmental practice is seen differently in different places; since countries have their own political framing for national planning and whether environmental practices are implemented. Environmental management also varies as it is undertaken by profit, non-profit organisations, and global institutions. Therefore, environmental initiatives are characterised by multiple schemes and approaches, e.g. ecolabels, codes of conduct, environmental practices, EMS, and environmental audit. The extent to which governments should be involved remains open to question and depends on the local political landscape, especially as many of these environmental schemes are voluntary. This voluntary environmental programme seems to be the only method used by government to encourage SMHs to change behaviour. Alternatively, environmental legislation is seen as problematic given the complexities and components of tourism and its sub-sectors. If environmental policy and resulting legislation cannot be identified clearly, how can it be accounted for in the local government strategy? Taking environmental sustainability by government into action is the most obvious evidence showing serious action taken. That means action is being seriously conducted and will have impact, e.g. tax rebates (Cheng *et al.*, 2013). However, socio-cultural conditions are

a primary factor in the levels of difficulty in implementation (Wongthong & Harvey, 2014). Different developing countries discovered particular problems that needed to be solved dissimilarly, even if the overall problems are similar. Scholars have later found many constraints towards integrating environmental sustainability within existing national policy frameworks (Farmaki *et al.*, 2014; Logar, 2010). Some studies discovered lack of knowledge and human resources, or knowledgeable staff directly relate to poorly performing environmental practice (Carter *et al.*, 2015; Churugsa *et al.*, 2010; Connell *et al.*, 2009; Dredge *et al.*, 2011; Farmaki *et al.*, 2014; Ruhanen, 2013). Local authorities should really know, within their political and cultural contexts, how to encourage compliance and desired environmental behaviours. However, there are some barriers preventing environmental practice by tourism stakeholders. Dredge *et al.* (2011), in their study of the approach used in Northern Rivers, New South Wales and Perth's Eastern Region, argued that the existing market-led regional framework failed to provide any support at the local level. The staff remained unconvinced about the importance of tourism and therefore saw it as a low priority when compared with overflowing garbage cans and poor road surface conditions. The market-led approach for sustainable tourism is likely to be understood by a tourism agency, but not government staff. Market approaches are more likely to deal with specific sustainable resolutions that can solve a particular problem. However, the market-led approach may not be easy to communicate to target groups and individuals. Looking at different problems of sustainability, solving them using a variety of communication channels might help achieve sustainable tourism at the local level. Additionally, the emphasis on the cultural differences is also highlighted, for example, Boyle (1998: 95) argues that

it is vital to consider cultural as well as technical factors when examining the difficulties of implementing policies or programs like Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which are invented in the West and transferred to another culture with very different social and political heritages and practices.

His research was carried out in 1990 to 1991 in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. He attempted to emphasise understanding the cultural and general difficulties that comes with a Western environmental tool when it is transferred to an Eastern context. Consequently, environmental mechanisms emerged as a problem in combination with social aspect influences.

4.2 Previous Studies of Sustainable Tourism related Policy in Developing Countries

Thailand is generally described as a developing country (Churugsa *et al.*, 2010), and enjoying significant tourism income since the 6th National economic and social development plan (1982–1986). The country has experienced environmental problems since the mid- 1980s but has finally responded to the global call for sustainable tourism development. Sustainable tourism in terms of environmental sustainability is explored in the context of government and the action integrated and whether sustainable tourism is achieved. For example, Muangasame and McKercher (2014) studied the 7 Green policy by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in terms of implementing with the people, as the programme refers to seven things to help save environmental resources. Their finding show that the programme did not appear successful, they revealed many limitations of the central Thai government in relation to local government agencies. Firstly, TAT, a purely tourism government agency, initiated the 7 Green; there was a lack of direct involvement or collaboration of other local government agencies in the programme. Non-TAT and local government found it less useful for their organisations as they stated that they have their own environmental practices. Secondly, the operationalized issues that challenged the plan going into action included lack of clarity. Lastly, the political issues are to be considered. In Asian culture, cronyism often develops under the collectivist social framework whereby individuals can expect their relatives or members of particular group to look after them in exchange for unquestioned loyalty. This shows a cultural aspect that addresses Thai values. In other words, social-cultural framework is of influence (Cheng *et al.*, 2013; Qi *et al.*, 2008).

Muangasame and McKercher's (2014) study highlighted the importance of the project being conducted with specific care, targets, and clearly stated objectives. Moreover, local governments have limited capacity to participate with other partners because they have limited budget and human resources to engage in non-core activities. This 7 Green policy project is initially aimed to involve everybody including government, non-government, residents, local entrepreneurs and international firms where the specific task would be different. SO, the constraints arising would be distinctive; for example, central government found it difficult to associate with other government bodies; because government agencies normally largely operate independently, while the local sector saw the 7 Green programme as irrelevant to their responsibility as they don't see the programme benefitting to their firms.

Similarly, Wongthong and Harvey (2014) studied the concept of integrated coastal management and sustainable tourism development on Tao Island, Thailand. Tao is well known as the busiest diving centre in Southeast Asia. Their results indicate that dive tourism is intense over other activities, and that there is a lack of government support including legislative action, funding, and academic contribution. Local government is seen as paying far more attention to economic development than to environmental protection. More importantly, Wongthong and Harvey argue that best practice from one geographical location may not be applicable to other locations. Internationally accepted management frameworks are not always transferable. Each locality needs the opportunity to choose a suitable method for its own development requirements. This is similar to Logar (2010) who argues that not every instrument could satisfy the criteria in different dimensions. Even the foster from the Thai government, there could be only minority of entrepreneurs that involve in the tourism sustainable policy (Nilnoppakun, Ampavat, 2016)

Churugsa *et al.* (2010), studied the capacity of local government to achieve sustainable tourism in Thailand. The local government in this study is focused on almost the smallest scale of the official administration, namely the *Tambon* (sub-district). Their findings show that local government has the legislative authority mandate, but there are capacity and

capability issues including resources, insufficient knowledge of tourism issues, budget and staffing

More importantly, it is very useful if government agencies are the first organisation to share knowledge and communicate and translate policy into practice at grassroots level. Interpretating knowledge into action requires collaboration from stakeholders, especially the central government and local government. However, Wang and Ap's (2013) study of policy implementation in three major cities – Beijing, Kunming and Lijiang – focused on factors affecting tourism policy implementation. They argued that institutional relations between the state government and local government interfered with each other, and they failed to collaborate effectively. Similarly, this was also found in Hatipoglu's (2014) study, that the most frequently-mentioned problem is the lack of collaboration between agencies. As a result, contrasting development ideas between local tourism authority and state government emerged. National governments are even more influential when competing with a local tourism authority. The literature clearly indicates the need for institutional reform. Thus, a well thought out (and thought through) plan for overall development should be determined, giving clarity of direction for government agents to follow and upon which to focus. The literature usually reveals these problems are due to lack of staff capability and resource scarcity. In other words, an unclear mission and limited understanding of tourism-related issues upon which to conduct tourism policy are the result of institutional weakness.

Failure in planning is the starting point of unsuccessful sustainable tourism development. However, it is not surprising as developing countries are dependent on foreign currency, and economic growth often takes precedence over the more long-term exploration of sustainable tourism development options in many destinations. Sustainable tourism is an unending journey, that is to say, it is an unrelenting process focused on sustainable management with environmental resources to bargain, which when exerted by political power can happen swiftly. But it may take place in an unsuccessful sustainable tourism country, e.g. China (Cheng et al, 2013) or Cyprus, where there have been power struggles over authority (Farmaki *et al.*, 2014). Ruhanen (2013),

in her study of sustainable tourism policy in Queensland, Australia, found that decentralizing from federal to local government gave clear, local responsibility for driving the sustainable tourism agenda. This is a new role for local government to be able to influencing in the local governance structure, which is posed for the adoption of sustainable tourism.

Goodwin (2011) argues that the environment is everyone's responsibility. But the lack of understanding of sustainable tourism may be due to the lack of perception of direct impact at the individual level. Sustainable tourism demands global participation, worldwide institutions have described environmental issues as a global-level impact. Consequently, local action is not actually taken this environmental problem impact into account. They just conduct their affairs following the law, which as indicated above in the literature, can be inadequate, especially where there are differences between national and local governments. Encouraging action and responsibility at the local level must be given priority (Muangasame & McKercher, 2014). The local level should be informed about what is affecting them in current situations, as this is a concrete level that communities can understand and respond to. Torress-Delgado and Palomeque's (2012) study of sustainable tourism in terms of the contribution of institutional initiatives to tourism policy in the last decade concluded that translating sustainable tourism into tourism policy is not a clear, specific action for practical application of the concept.

Chapter 5

Tourism in Thailand and Thai culture

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed notions and concepts about owners/ managers in their SME context, giving an idea of how environmental practices are conducted in SMEs. However, because SMEs' motivations are different from those of general large businesses, some issues do arise. As established in chapter 3, the start-up of SMEs is often motivated by non-economic factors, such as family and social reasons. Previous studies have shown that most SMEs can be called lifestyle business. However, in order to conduct environmental practices, it is unpredictable that all lifestyle businesses would conduct environmental initiative similarly. There must be differences among geographic location.

This chapter outlines the tourism situation in Thailand. It also gives an overview of hotel certification and relevant environmental initiatives in Thailand and on the global stage, followed by business and cultural characteristics. The chapter aims to illustrate the Thai business atmosphere, where attitudes and values play a significant role. Thailand has a

collectivist culture (Hofstede centre, 2015), therefore an understanding of indigenous culture (e.g. Buddhist thought) is necessary in order to gain insights into how environmental practices are conducted in Thai hotel SMEs.

5.2 Tourism in Thailand

Thailand is a middle-income country (United Nations, 2012). The Thai government included tourism development policy in the fourth national economic and social development plan (1977–1981), with a specific focus on economics as the major aspect for developing countries (Office of National Economic and Social Development Board, 2012). The fifth plan (1982–1986) eventually achieved the purpose of tourism by starting to bring in foreign exchange, becoming the highest export earner for Thailand (Li & Zhang, 1997). This was the point at which tourism become favourable in terms of the country's revenue. Later, the seventh plan (1992–1996) reflected a change in tourism development principles in Thailand, after the Earth Summit had taken place. As a consequence of the conference, member nations agreed on Agenda 21, which stated that all development should be sustainable (i.e. as stated earlier, balancing social, environmental and economic benefits and reducing negative impacts). The target of sustainable tourism is to maintain an appropriate balance between tourism, environmental conservation, economic development, and satisfying the needs and desires of tourists and local residents (Wongthong & Harvey, 2014). Although the subsequent plans of the Thai government mentioned sustainable development, economic goals are still likely to govern other objectives, because Thailand is a leader in a number of regional and sub-regional cooperation initiatives in areas including trade, investment and tourism (Li & Zhang, 1997). So far, the endeavours of global agencies have significantly influenced new emerging markets and tourism activities in Thailand. Sustainable tourism become a favourable term for the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), the main tourism organisation of government at that time, and the promotion of sustainable tourism has been conducted as fundamental for tourism development ever since. Ecotourism and community-based tourism have increased since the beginning of sustainable tourism development in

Thailand in 1991. Since then, it has diversified into various tourism models, e.g. responsible tourism, green tourism, and alternative tourism. At the present time, sustainable tourism is still being used as a tool for tourism development.

5.3 Significance of culture related to environmental management.

According to Goodwin (2011), claimed about the environmental initiative that 'there is no one size fit all', particular implication needed to be formulated suitably with certain location and also at local level. His notion is emphasized on difference between geographical area and society, which included social aspect, increasing in social value toward environment to be factor that differentiates holistic area from others. The cultural factor can be discovered and fill the gap knowledge between different ethnicities (Gore, 2005). For example, the work of Hashimoto (2010) reveals that the worldview of environmental concern is not more important than the happiness of family. The Japanese, Taiwanese and Chinese see environmental responsibility as something for government. Moreover, there is the interesting point that these people may not understand the relationship between humans and nature. Indicator-based approaches, which address intangible cultural impact, cannot be used properly with indigenous people such as the Australian aborigines (Opperman & Chon, 1997). That is every destination has its own social pace and knowledge gained from generation to generation (Hashimoto, 2009). Culture is agreed by social group, and shared within it; view toward things is constructed and interpreted distinctively. Culture is meant to share within social group. Its interaction is between human being and environment and amongst human (Jain, 2012).

Human-being interaction toward environment is found dissimilar between social group and more wider perspective such as nation, region, e.g. use of energy, transportation, support for policy (Cooke, 1996; Witt, 2012) Scholars have become more concern particularity of context as formed by social and interaction of human and nature. Use of nature has been shared similar action. According to Semple (1996), interaction between

human and nature can be explored in Human Geography. Geography study always come with the history that telling the background of human interaction to location and that must look back to its relation between human events in various periods of time and factor in different historical stage of cultural development. Environment cause human culture in geographic location, bringing everyday life, arts, social rules to adjust human itself with environment and/or using natural resources. Interaction within human is therefore illustrated as social norm, value, wisdom, and belief that influenced by human geography. In other words, it is dominant toward human thought and transfer to behaviour in society. However, in global participation, the issue of environment has been discussed in physical use and searching for standardized implication. However, The philosophy widely spread based on western thought was considered inappropriate tool for any geographical area. That was the grand theories such as Marxism and neoclassical economics. In terms of economic, a decline of master concept of universal reason, sociology whilst its grand-concept 'society', politics in respect of 'the party', and in economics with regard to 'the firm', was signified to space and spatiality. The meaning of 'local' is better understood as 'particular' (Cooke, 1996: p.484). Cooke (ibid), the notion of locality is resulted in the interaction of endogenous and exogenous. Local action, therefore, is the product of some degree for collective will to exercise these rights in specific circumstances. Hence, this study is seen people in different areas producing their local knowledge that rooted in their society. It is led to behaviour and practice distinctively to environment. Culture is then illustrated their attitude and interaction toward practice. Thailand culture is reviewed in the following topic.

5.3 Overall Business and Culture Characteristics of Thailand

According to Promsiri (1965), Thailand is Buddhist society and an absolute monarchy. Thailand has never been under colonial rule; the old social context is grounded in rural in particular. A traditional society is seen as a bulk of people on farmlands who have low incomes per capita, geographical isolation and social immobility, a subsistence agricultural economy, and, socio-political underdevelopment. Adaptation of

modernization and civilization is seen difficult as requires change of the adopters. Thai stereotyped as easy-going is massively resistant to technological change. The developmental process is a vast process of change plus an innovation (p.6). Moreover, Thai are proud of their culture, material ends appear to embody happiness, prosperity, well-being and progressiveness but 'religion has taught Thais to set little weight on material goods'. According to Unger (1998) in the book "Building Social Capital in Thailand; Fibers, Finance , and Infrastructure, analysed previous studies of Thai culture that easy-going people, abundant and fertile land created among many Thais a view that it was senseless to work hard if it was not in fact necessary. Thais are limiting participation in voluntary associations with others, avoiding conflict and Thai society was 'loosely structured'. Moreover, Thais are wary and suspicious of others and relying on luck or patronage to secure their material and status needs. The role of family is dominant, no strong interest of group or class identities, avoiding interpersonal friction and maintained shallow relation when interaction with other was necessary. Additionally, the pervasive vertical relations between patron and client were important in all areas of Thai life where exercised by traditional elites, government officials, wealthy figures in business, or provincial godfathers (p.27-36). Typically, such an easy-going delineation of boundaries between them and us is associated with lower levels of trust.

Small and medium-sized businesses (SME) are a major driver of Thailand's economy. Thirty-seven per cent of Gross Domestic Per Capita (GDP) is accounted for by a 70 per cent rise of national employment in SMEs (Kumjon & Tatyatikom, 2012). Additionally, Thai companies are mainly family-owned businesses (Niffenegger *et al.*, 2006), therefore the research focuses on SMEs, which is the main business model in Thailand.

Business size is an important cultural dimension of Thailand's economy. Thailand's SME sector has traditionally placed high value on maintaining family connections; in other words, it relies on and is concerned with personal relationships (Intachakra, 2012; Tapanya, 2011). This phenomenon is explained by Pimpa (2012), who investigated the repercussion of cultural perspectives on Thai management style in the public sector

context. Pimpa's work clearly demonstrates that avoiding conflict and uncertainties remain key characteristics of the Thai public sector. In such circumstances, having close relationships with each other in the working place leads to better working and a smooth and peaceful environment.

It is important to understand the uniqueness of the country. Boyle (1998), Niffenegger *et al.* (2006), Burnard and Naiyapatana (2004) and Jirapornkul and Yolles (2010) summarised Thai characteristics in terms of cultural perspective as:

5.3.1 *Hai Kiat*

In terms of the *working professional*, this is the Thai desire for face-to-face business contact, based on trust and confidentiality, whereas the West utilises increased productivity of e-commerce via the Internet and other remote interactions. Generally, *Hai Kiat* is considered the other's status, hierarchy, and power, in behaving suitably and respectfully.

5.3.2 *Tha-na, Chon-chun and Um-nard* (Status, Hierarchy and Power)

Interaction in Thai society is strongly determined by these features. According to Boyle (1998), power and authority flow downward through a hierarchy of relationships whereas deference to authority flows upward. Deference is commonly expected by and granted to people of higher status. In return for the assurance of deference from subordinates, leaders are supposed to perform the roles expected of the powerful. Status prevails in all social relationships and is based on criteria such as age, family background, and professional rank. Enhancing one's status is a principal motivational factor, because a person's power and influence rises or falls in concert with it. In government, lower-ranking officials have difficulty standing up to higher-ranking officials. Therefore, special requests from higher-ups for cooperation are difficult to refuse even though they may hide ulterior motives (Vichit-Vadaka, 1989 in Boyle, 1998).

5.3.3 Oop-pa-tham system (Personalism, Patrons and Clients)

Thai people rely on indebtedness in personal relationships. In government, for example, the relations between superiors and subordinates often take this form. The patron provides protection, security of position and income, social connections, or economic benefits or opportunities in exchange for deference, loyalty, support, gifts or labour from the client or dependent (Boyle, 1998). Consequently, this patron–client form can strongly influence decision-making and the distribution of power and its benefits without considering the formal hierarchy of an organisation. The patron–client relationships are established on a very personal basis, because familiarity is considered to bring goodwill and trustworthiness; people outside one's 'circle' tend not to be trusted, and those inside are protected (Nakata & Dhiravegin, 1989).

5.3.4 Kii Len

This means playfulness. Thai people like to have fun, not only during their free time, but also during work. Thai people desire fun all the time, resulting in an attitude towards work that can lead to inattention or not working hard.

5.3.5 Nha yai

Even on the lowest level, Thai people feel they are as good as others; thus everyone must prove to other people that they should accept or honour them, by doing extravagant things or by dressing fashionably. Thai people fear that someone may look down on them and this is not acceptable to the average Thai person.

5.3.6 Tum aria tam jai kue Thai thae

They like an easy life; nobody wants to make an effort or do anything difficult. In their approach to daily life, in general, Thai people like to proceed in the easiest and most convenient way.

5.3.7 Pen Nai Tua Eang

Thai people like the freedom of being 'one's own person'. The ability to be on one's own is important and goes along with the desire not to be under anyone. As a result, Thai people do not desire to work as a group or team.

There are several proverbs that illustrate Thai characteristic, these are shown their attitude which influencing their social interaction and lead personal behavior.

5.3.8 Shar shar dai plar lem ngarm

This can be translated as 'do things slowly; do not rush and you will be able to get things done productively'. This tends to make Thai people reluctant to take risks if outcomes in terms of quality and practice are unsure. Moreover, the Thai management style is similar to that of other Asian countries because of shared cultural roots; and to some extent it is collectivistic and avoids uncertainty. As a result of this risk-aversion, Thai society is uncomfortable with change. In an effort to minimise or reduce uncertainty, strict rules, laws, policies, and regulations are adopted and implemented.

5.3.9 Dern tam poo yai mhar mai kad

This can be translated as 'walking following the senior step and you will not be bitten by a dog'. The meaning of this proverb is, loosely, respect for seniority. People who have seniority are generally older and have accumulated significant experience. Persons of lower seniority should know their status and try to agree with their seniors,

and sometimes refrain from expressing their own opinions. Persons of lower seniority should certainly not argue with those who have superiority.

5.3.10 Kop kon parn parn par pai hha pid, kop bun dhit bun dhit par pai hha pon

This can be translated as ‘if you go with gangster people, they will bring you to do bad things; if you go with educated people, they will bring you to a good result’. This emphasises the acquisition of education. Thai people believe in and trust educated persons (those who have degrees or certificates from university), who they consider to be knowledgeable. People who are educated will have a good career with honour and acquire a good position in an organisation and society. Education helps to upgrade work and social status.

5.3.1 Mai Pen Rai

This translates as ‘it does not matter’ or ‘forgive each other easily’ or ‘it’s not substantial’. This value is taught by Thai Buddhism, to have a heart and show mercy towards each other. It is taught from childhood and accounts for the *Mai Pen Rai* responses to situations involving conflict. To some extent, according to Panpothong and Phakdeephassook (2014), the meaning of *Mai Pen Rai* is closely related to the Buddhist concept of the three characteristics of existence, namely ‘*Tri Laksana*’. The use of *Mai Pen Rai* in response to four interaction contexts are: 1) apologizing/thanking, 2) offering to help, 3) expressing desolation/complaining, and 4) expressing disagreement/making a critical remark or to terminate verbal conflict. *Tri Laksana* is a Buddhist concept that the existence of all beings shares three common characteristics; 1) Impermanence, 2) Suffering, and 3) No self, selflessness. All compound things come within the law of impermanence. They are constantly being born and dying, appearing and passing away. Thus, no one can avoid suffering from losing their beloved ones (Panpothong & Phakdeephassook, 2014). Therefore, to reduce suffering, one should detach oneself from the material world and earthly

concerns. To put it another way, one should then remind oneself that nothing is truly substantial in this world.

5.4 Extension of Kreng Jai and Thai Cultural Perspectives

This means being considerate of others' feelings. Thai people are taught to be humble and *Kreng Jai* others. Thai people do not like to disagree because they are afraid of offending. As a result, Thai people respond to any requests with agreeableness, but they agree many times only to relieve themselves of the immediate problem by responding respectfully. The concept of *Kreng Jai* has a strong root in Thai Buddhism, which teaches us to care for others more than for ourself. This is in strong contrast to the Western values of achievement and materialism, where success earns one the right to material rewards.

Thai SMEs organisation behaviour and attitude are characterised by its country cultural dimension. The country has placed high value on managing family relationship, particularly, avoiding conflict and uncertainties, including uniqueness characteristic, e.g. *Hai Kiat*, *Nha Yai*, *Pen Nai Tua Eang*, *Kii Len*. As Thai people are collective and are based on complicated-mind thinking, each character is, thus, illustrated its concept related to other cultural behaviour aspects, for example, being *Hai Kiat* is to concern interlocutor's status, power and hierarchy. Consequently, it is very necessary to understand Thai culture. Moreover, it is an outstanding cultural aspect of *Kreng Jai*, which has been obviously indicated Thailand in particular. The *Kreng Jai* word is used in a number situations and is explained in next topic.

The characteristic of *Kreng Jai* has been studied at length and in depth, as it is a unique characteristic of Thai cultural behaviour. *Kreng Jai* can be further explained: for example, Intachakra (2012) developed a 'politeness' theoretical framework by introducing a Thai politeness *Kwarm Kreng Jai* model (KKJ) that helps analysis of behaviour associated with KKJ. The model indicated that criticisms from another about their competence is a prime example of threat. In other words, how we feel and act towards others within the context

of social strata provides a framework for understanding cultural responses to environmental management. Between two people in communication, both parties will seek to maintain 'kreng jai', to make sure that each feels comfortable and that neither party is compromised (Burnard and Naiyapatana, 2004: pp763). Moreover, KKJ is a consideration of others' thoughts and the added complexity of 'losing face' is a social taboo. Preserving one's 'face' is the basic rule of all Thai interaction. The KKJ is another aspect of politeness, with a focus on the heart metaphor, incorporating the word *jai*, which means 'heart' or 'mind' in Thai.

Kwarm Kreng Jai, then, is a form of Thai politeness and other Thai speakers place the primary focus of interaction on gauging one's sense of place in relation to others and surrounding events. This is in contrast to the Westerner, who tends to organise and justify their experience in terms of rationality. KKJ is not a 'fear', but can be more accurately equated with a 'concern' or anxiety about how others may 'feel' as a result of one's expressed words and action.

In addition, Thai society emphasises 'social stratification' as expressed in old-young, subordinate-superior, and patron-dependent. KKJ is also applicable to stranger-to-stranger interactions as well, and can happen in non-verbal communication. It is not only speaker and listener, but also the silence of the speaker, who chooses to keep their thoughts in their mind; they may choose to keep quiet, rather than impose on others.

These findings show that politeness is a way to show consideration to others' feelings by rapport-oriented rationality methods, and relies on the heart metaphor to describe behaviours. KKJ is also a means of being polite, as part of 'the other comes first' ideology. Similarly, as Khutson (2004) found, Thai cultural values of 'smile and sawasdee' (traditional Thai greeting) are consistent with the previous finding of Intachakra (2002) about *Kreng Jai*. Thai people keep silent as a sign of politeness and avoid bothering or imposing on others. *Kreng Jai* is a feeling and polite behaviour that is shown in Thai culture in many ways.

Politeness is a cultural universal, but the more we move from one culture into the next, the more we tend to find differences in the forms, constraints, interpretations and weights each culture gives in conceptualising and rationalising politeness (Intachakra, 2002).

Additionally, relationship proximity is taken into account when Thai people communicate. The politeness of not interrupting or *Kreng Jai* to communicate something disagreeable to the interlocutor seems linked with the politeness issue. The reason of being *Kreng Jai* has led to hesitant making decision as always concern the interlocutor, expressing an unconfidence, then, leads to Thais being silent. The communication competence of Thais relies heavily on relationship proximity and situation. Dilbeck *et al.* (2008) suggest that Thai students feel most competent when communicating with acquaintances and in small groups, and least competent when interacting with strangers or speaking in public.

Thais are less confident among strangers and public places. They are considerate and *Kreng Jai*; they are highly collectivistic society (The Hofstede centre, 2015). This culture influences their motivation and viewpoint towards their lives. Belief is of major importance, as is religion, to the way they think.

5.5 Buddhist Influences

According to McGregor (2008) Religion is very important and shapes people's everyday behaviour and provides them with a lens to interpret development process. Jacobs (in Unger, 1998:p36) Buddhism gave Thais a kind of diffuse unity and flexibility while affording means of legitimizing new social undertakings.

Thailand is the third largest country in South-East Asia after Indonesia and Myanmar. The largest ethnic group in the country (98 per cent) is Thai, followed by Thais of Chinese origin and other minority groups who live along Thailand's borders. The main religion in Thailand is Buddhism. In Buddhist principles that do not necessarily accord with the norms of modern development (McGregor, 2008). Buddhist basic thought can be explained as 'if you do good to others, you receive good in return; consequently, help others, so that in

the event you need assistance, you will be helped in return'. One influential concept in Thai society is 'do the best thing, but do not stand out, because it will bring harm to you'. Thai people view that doing the right thing according to the group's standard is good (Pimpa, 2012).

Moreover, Thai people are taught to depend on each other and help one another or to show 'collectivism' instead of 'individualism'. Hofstede's analysis (2005) shows that Thailand has a low level of individualism and tends to have collectivistic social characteristics. According to Pimpa (2012), in a collectivist society, people are concerned about what others think of their actions and try to gain respect by acting in a way that meets the expectation of the individuals around them. The collectivist society and Buddhism are aimed at solidarity and harmony: the underpinnings of Thai society and culture.

Given its central role in everyday life, religion cannot be left as an abstract or peripheral practice. Religion is the foundation of national belief. The adoption of alternative means of religious-based philosophy has raised significant moral and ethical issues. Religious-based development methods are used in conjunction with the favourable Western perspective.

According to Rigg (2003), Buddhist philosophy's links with development theory and stresses moral and ethical considerations; all actions should have an outcome that strives to minimise negative effects, and bring a holistic vision to economics, which reflects the holistic nature of existence. This is emphasised in the new development approach. However, the contradiction is that the mainstream is trying to give human beings more choices, while Buddhism has always taught to stay in the middle and achieve balance: not too much and not too little. Therefore, choices (blind craving) in Buddhism are too much, and need to be controlled. Buddhism in Thailand is seen in intimate association with nature and humans.

There is more evidence that Buddhism is grounded in development in Thailand at the local level. In 1998, Thailand's king called for a slower growth approach, using the nation's

human and natural resources in a way that would allow the country to control its destiny through a return to basic Buddhist principles (Noy, 2011). The present king recognised that modernization and the widespread embracing of materialistic values, and adoption of a money-centred strategy as the nation development paradigm, could have a destructive result. The concept is followed the Buddhist concept of self-reliance as embodied in the slogan 'produce enough to live on while preserving the integrity of the environment', which is the universal life-support system for sustainable living (Niffenegger *et al.*, 2006). Individuals see this not as an opposition to globalization or capitalism, but as an approach to sufficiency theory, or that countries can successfully enter into globalization while protecting themselves from its dangers and risks of reliance on others. Buddhism teaches its followers not to harm the environment, individuals or society. Moreover, according Yuenyong and Yuenyong (2012: pp5374), Buddhist beliefs did not encourage the learner to consider creating new innovations in science and technology because the Buddhist perspective does not encourage the production of material wealth. This opposes the dominant materialist world-view which regards science and technology as the solution of all problems.

Self-Control, Avoidance of Conflict, Face

For Thai people dealing with unpleasant or dangerous situations is avoidance and silence, patience and tolerance towards injustices, and being modest, considerate and averse to criticizing others in their presence. It is better for a person who wants to hear than to risk being controversial or confrontational (Burnard and Naiyapatana, 2004:pp763). Thai people strive to achieve interpersonal harmony, relying on the social graces for smooth face-to-face interactions and disguising or suppressing true feelings, aggression and disagreement with others. This is rooted in Buddhist principles, which pervade Thai life: *Sai Klaang* (stay in the middle or middle path), which prompts Thai people to compromise rather than hurt another's feelings and a simple style of daily living (Yuenyong and Yuenyong, 2012: pp5374). This is exercised with *Kreng Jai*.

Chapter 6:

Research Methods

6.1 Chapter Overview

Previous chapters have set out the principles underpinning the understanding of Thai characteristics and motivations in relation to operating SMHs. Development theories have helped create a broad understanding of sustainable tourism in the context of developing countries. Endogenous and exogenous issues related to environmental practices were also discussed as components of sustainable tourism development. This chapter sets out and explains the methods used to gather and analyse data in answering the research questions.

This chapter justifies the use of interpretive paradigm and qualitative study methods. Details of sampling techniques, data collection, and analysis methods are discussed. Additionally, the pilot and main studies and limitation of data collection are discussed.

6.2 Paradigm, Ontology, Epistemology and Method

A paradigm is not just a philosophy of science: it is also related to social science theories, and thus it guides research and practice in the field (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Willis, 2007). In other words, the researcher's action is underpinned by a basic set of beliefs that define

their worldview (Goodson & Philimore, 2004: 34). The basic beliefs that define any paradigm have three fundamental components: ontology, epistemology, and methodology. The predominant paradigms are, following tradition, divided into two main approaches: the positivist and interpretive paradigms, which obviously stand for different worldviews.

Historically, the dominant paradigm was positivism or the positivist paradigm, based on 'scientific rules', from the work of Comte. In the late nineteenth century, he claimed that only scientific knowledge can reveal the truth about reality (Crook and Garratt, 2011). Additionally, positivism asserts that real events can be observed empirically and explained with logical analysis (Kaboub, 2008: 343). Only directly experienced data is relevant to science; words and terms have universal and fixed meanings. The aim of the positivist paradigm is the explanation of the behaviour of phenomena through causal relationships and the production of general statements or "laws" (Yates, 1998: 14). Interpretations are said to be value-free and statistically tested. Only facts can be recognised as scientific. Some potential areas of tourism research are, for example, consumer behaviour, environmental impact, economic impact, marketing, tourism forecasting and modelling, and so on (Jennings, 2010: 39).

Interestingly, an alternative emerged to challenge the existing paradigm. It is called the interpretive paradigm, based on Max Weber and his term *verstehen* (understanding) (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Interpretivists view the social world as having multiple holistic and contextual realities. It is thought that the complex social world can be comprehended only from the viewpoint of persons who perform in the site (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004: 36). Thus, from the social sciences interpretive perspective, what the world means to the person or group being studied, their motives, ends, shared, relationships, plans and expectations (Yates, 1998: 136) is critically important to good research in the social sciences (Willis, 2007: 6). The social construct is multiple and interrelated with environmental surroundings and is constantly changing (Sale *et al.*, 2002). Thus, the

experiences of individuals are substantially context-bound; the people being studied cannot be freed from place and time (Jennings, 2010).

Having discussed the difference between two paradigms, which remains controversial among scholars, there is no legitimate way of asserting with absolute confidence that one paradigm is better (Willis, 2007): each works well or not according to context. Similarly, Jennings (2004) claimed that when paying much attention to the argument of which paradigm is appropriate, the researcher should consider the best approach to achieve the aims of his or her particular study.

The present study aims to gain insights into how SMH manager-owners understand the environmental management from their point of view. Their experiences are context-bound by place, time and society; attitudes and opinions towards working experiences are formed by particular social setting and geographies. Therefore, there are multiple ideas involved and an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative approach to the research will provide the most effective, nuanced results.

The chief research focus is to understand the SMHs' views on their environment. However, the experiences of individuals are substantially context-bound; and people being studied cannot be free from place and time (Jennings, 2010).

The ontological basis or the nature of truth of the positivist paradigm is that there is only one truth, an 'objective' and 'out there' reality that exists independently from human perception (Sale *et al.*, 2002). The researcher believes in the existence of the 'real' world and the universal knowledge created through the application of objective thinking (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004: 35). Analysing human behaviour through causal relationships is explainable (Jennings, 2010). This approach has its roots in the scientific belief that 'objectives' can be studied by setting 'variables', and the researcher is 'outside' the study frame. So, there are always 'causes' and 'effects' as in all scientific study. Human behaviours are explainable. Positivism is also recognised as a scientific study that will be predictable over time (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

On the other hand, interpretive orientations perceive ontology as multiple realities or multiple truths, based on a person's construction of reality (Sale *et al.*, 2002). These constructions are subject to constant revision as contextual changes are likely to occur, and multiple knowledge depends on social factors and interpretation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In other words, multiple realities can exist in any given situation (Creswell, 1994: 4). The realities stress the "inter-subjective" nature of human interaction (Yates, 1998: 136).

The present study's ontology lies with interpretive paradigm, which is framed by multiple realities. As an SMH's worldview is particular, and facing different situations, their sense of responsibility needs to be understood and explained as a set of multiple truths.

Epistemologically, there is a relationship between the researcher and the subjects or objects, intending to answer the question of what it means to 'know' or 'what we can know about reality'. With regard to positivism, the research is assumed not to influence the results or findings of a study project (Sale *et al.*, 2002) which stresses 'objectivity': the separation of the target object from the researcher (Yates, 1998: 137). Therefore, real causes of social scientific results can be determined reliably and validly with empirical evidence (Johnson & Onwueguzie, 2004: 14). In surveys and experiments, research attempts to control for bias, select a systematic sample and be 'objective' when assessing results (Creswell, 1994: 5). Thereby, any researchers conducting the same study would reach the same result (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004: 6).

On the other hand, the interpretive paradigm presumes that there is no access to reality independent of our mind (Sale *et al.*, 2002). It is impossible to differentiate totally between causes and effects, as the knower is the only source of reality, and individual constructions can be elicited and refined only through interaction between and among the researchers and people being studied (Johnson & Onwueguzie, 2004; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As Brannen (1992: 4-5) states, researchers must use themselves as instruments in seeking to achieve imaginative insight into the respondents' social world, the so-called 'participant observation', the act of gaining and understanding of social reality through dynamic interaction between the observer and those observed.

Methodologically, positivism is most likely associated with quantitative approaches bounded by statistical or numerical data. The positivist approach is based on the hypothetic-deductive framework which tests cause-and-effect orders with the use of impersonal language (avoidance of the first person etc.) and reporting the ‘facts’ from the evidence gathered from the study (Creswell, 1994: 6). Yates (2004: 35) points out that in surveys there are often questions about feelings, attitudes and personal values which are not directly experienced phenomena.

Considering the interpretive methodology, that paradigm requires the researcher to become, in a sense, part of the social group being studied; therefore, qualitative approaches are employed in this paradigm. The emphases of qualitative research are to understand and interpret the social context of data about activities, events, occurrences and behaviours (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). As a result, knowledge of the world is thereby constructed inductively (Sale *et al.*, 2002).

At this juncture, the findings of a qualitative approach are specific to those who are involved, but the observer will derive an in-depth knowledge of the tourism phenomena (Jennings, 2010), while the findings of a quantitative approach generally provide a wider view. Therefore, a qualitative approach is employed to answer ‘why’ and ‘how’ it links in realities and specific locations that led to different phenomena. An understanding of culture is well embedded in qualitative approaches, thus allowing for cultural nuances.

6.3 Research Location and Justification of Research Site

6.3.1 Sample and sampling techniques

(i) Sample size

The key respondents for the research questions are SMH managers or SMH owners (in many cases, these two can be conflated, as typically a small business is run by the owner with no separate ‘manager’ post). Managers/owners are targeted because they are

responsible for business strategy implementation and they affect a variety of the firm's outcomes (Harrington & Kendall, 2006).

Government agents are also the key informants of the study, as SMHs must comply with the law and legislation. The interaction and support from the government must be acknowledged. Therefore the government agent perspective is important and reflects their national missions and situation applied to the case of Nong Khai. The government representatives are from different offices, but have competencies related to environmental issues.

The Institute for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (ISMED) (2011) defines small firms as those that were independently owned and managed, and employed fewer than 50 employees, with those that employed fewer than two hundred being recognised as medium-sized enterprises. A research population comprising 98 SMH firms in the city of Nong Khai was identified.

The ISMED definition refers to small and medium-sized businesses of any type in Thailand. This causes a significant gap between hotel businesses and production-based businesses. The identity and characteristics of the accommodation sector in Thailand, which often employ very low numbers of people and family members, do not fit easily with the ISMED's definition. ISMED's activities are aimed at financial support; in other words, ISMED is a government 'back-up' bank owned by the government, which aims to boost the economy and is not specifically focused on the accommodation sector. However, the provincial office (another government organisation) has a branch in every district, and is seen as knowledgeable about, and influential on, local hotel businesses. Therefore, the present study defines SMHs as follows: small businesses that provide accommodation services of between four and 30 rooms; those that provide fewer than 80 rooms are medium-sized accommodation businesses, based on the process of environmental assessment by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

The difference in the concept of small and medium-sized businesses between the ISMED and the provincial office is a result of the classification type used. The situation 'on the

ground is that most small hotels employ only two or three people. Legally, the government office is also responsible for hotel businesses registration directly. The use of the registered hotel database and meaning defined by government section (that is, the provincial office) is the most practical and reliable.

(ii) Sampling

Interview sampling

In the real world of social science research, non-probability sampling is widespread when time constraints and costs force the researcher to act with pragmatism. In this case, the pragmatic decision is the use of the purposive sampling technique (Lewin, 2011) in selecting interviewees. The researcher selected sampling units subjectively, in an attempt to obtain a sample representative of the target population; in other words, on the basis of wanting to interview people who are relevant to the research questions (Bryman, 2004: 334, Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). In order to select interviewees, the researcher selects participants who are, based on the researcher's judgement, most likely to provide useful, complete, and diverse information.

In this study, after the researcher first becoming known by the SMHs, the selection of key informants was guided by supported information by local government staff and the researcher's judgement to select who is likely to be interviewed and could deliver useful information for the study. Therefore, there is no need to identify an exact number of key informants.

In conclusion, in order to gain appropriate data, the researcher continued to interview people until reaching a point where no new information is being obtained, known as the saturation point (Kumar, 2011: 213).

Practically, the researcher set the interviewing time for 45 minutes in each interview. Provided that the interview is unlikely to reach the saturation point, the researcher would then interview this subject again at a convenient time, assuming that the key informant was happy to do so. The research would attempt to observe their reaction.

In addition, the researcher looked for different SMH locations in six districts in Nong Khai city. The researcher aims to gain a deep understanding, as there are two distinct characteristics of SMHs in town centre and countryside. These characteristics are that these businesses seemed to have different working atmospheres, which impact on various views of environmental management. However, the views may also be influenced by rural or urban culture.

6.4 Design of Research Instruments

6.4.1 Sampling and recruitment procedure

As noted above, this study adopts a qualitative approach to the research questions, with the target respondents being SMH hotel owner/ managers in the city of Nong Khai. Nong Khai is reasonably chosen to be the study area due the sudden increase of hotel numbers between 2009 and 2010 from 27 to 92 registered hotel numbers (see table 5.3), SMHs in particular. It is, therefore, shown a significant importance of tourism business operating in Nong Khai city.

Justification of selecting SMH owner-managers and government staff

The researcher selects sampling units subjectively in an attempt to obtain a sample that appears to be representative of the population: in other words, on the basis of wanting to interview people who are relevant to the research questions (Bryman, 2004: 334; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992).

SMHs are navigated by managers, who are responsible for strategy and business implementation, and who can affect a variety of firm outcomes (Harrington & Kendall, 2006).

Additionally, in order to gain insight into the regulatory and policy framework for tourism, government staffs were interviewed, as they play significant roles in dealing with the business sector. The features of key informants are identified in table 5.1.

Table 6.1: Key informants and rationale

Key Informant	Description	Rationale
RF1-RF21	Small and medium-sized hotel owners or managers in Nong Khai city	<p>SMH managers are responsible for the complete activities of the business. This position enables them to design, prioritise, and allocate jobs and control the internal environment to achieve their business aims. They are likely to control and navigate all functions.</p> <p>SMH owners are directly influential on staff and managers as owners can address their policy and goal of the businesses. They are involved in directing the business plan. Owners in Nong Khai are mostly in charge of the businesses, so they seem to be leading the firms' actions.</p>
GR1-GR3	Government agents who work in district offices as their duties relate to hotel businesses assessment and they are responsible for hotel business registration	<p>This position is separate in every district; there are seven districts in Nong Khai city. These staff represent the government. Their positions are directly related to accommodation businesses. The staff are able to take legal action and are involved in determining business operations. They are consultants for the businesses in terms of registration and assessment. They are respectful and have power to help or hinder businesses. Although they are not in a position to close a business, they are the first authorized person to be in touch with the business sector and also can approve documentation for higher authorities.</p>
TR4	Nong Khai provincial Office of Tourism and Sport	<p>This position represents the Ministry of Tourism and Sport (MOTS). This position is involved with the local government office in collaboration with finance support for activities relating to tourism and sport and support is conducted via local government, as it is a government service.</p>
FF5	Regional Environment office (Nong Khai)	<p>This person is responsible for environmental pollution. This position controls pollution under the law to be within the accepted level. To randomly check the wastewater treatment in SMHs. Being a consultant for environmental issues in Nong Khai area. To evaluate the Environmental Indicator Assessment (EIA).</p>
FF6	Tourism Authority of Thailand, provincial office (Nong Khai, Bung Kan and Udonthani Cluster)	<p>This position is responsible for tourism promotion and marketing in Thailand. This organisation is the most experienced in tourism activity and development. The office is now responsible for only marketing and promoting. Therefore, they are likely to be the most up to date with global tourism and trends.</p>
BF7	Nong Khai Municipality	<p>This position is responsible for construction plan approval, the construction plan must be checked against the law and legislation by this position before allowing the actual construction to start. The environmental conditions are considered here.</p>

6.4.2 Research questions

The research questions and interview questions must be consistent. However, interview questions are translated into Thai, as the study was carried out in Thailand. All key informants are Thai citizens and preferred to answer in Thai as it is the national language. Therefore, the interview questions below are represented in the way responded to research questions. As English and Thai are different in terms of grammatical structure, the questions were not translated word for word, but the sentences carry the same meaning. The researcher did the translations, so that questions deliver the true meaning. Thai is the researcher's mother tongue; therefore, asking questions in the researcher's first language was straightforward. Moreover, using SMHs' preferred language, Thai, made it more likely that the interviewees gave a true sense of their perspectives, feelings and real reaction, with no obstacles in translating their thoughts into English. This reduced anxiety and embarrassment among SMHs when they were interviewed. Moreover, the researcher does not know the SMHs' educational backgrounds and so could not be sure whether they would be able to speak English; asking them to conduct the interview in English without concern for their fluency could be taken to mean that the researcher looked down on their ability, which would be harmful for the interviewing data collected. As Thai people do not want to 'lose face' that they have no ability and that decreases their confidence, preserving one's 'face' is the basic rule of all Thai interaction (see chapter Extension of *Kreng Jai* and Thai cultural perspectives); it was decided to conduct the interviewing process in Thailand with Thai people who have Thai as their first language, using the Thai language throughout.

This study is carried out with government staff in order to explore deeply and reflect all points of view to give data richness. The scope of each research question to be carried out with SMHs and government staff is listed in tables 5.2 and 5.3.

Table 6.2 Interview questions for SMH managers/owners in the context of research questions and objectives

Objectives	Research Question	Interview question
1. To comprehend SMHs' motivations for conducting accommodation businesses beyond profitability.	What are the cultural motivations for conducting SMH businesses?	1. Why do you conduct the business?
2. To investigate how they view the significance of environmental practices for their business operations.	How their cultural worldview influences their business environmental practices?	1. Do you know of environmental problems? Can you describe some? 2. Who is responsible for environmental problems? Why? 3. Do you think that your businesses are causing environmental problems? Why? 4. How do you conduct environmental practices with staff and guests?
3. How their cultural worldview influences their business environmental practices.	What cultural barriers prevent implementation of environmental practices?	1. What do you view as barriers to implementing environmental initiatives in your businesses? 2. Can you explain Thai behaviour that may affect the implementation of environmental practices in the businesses?

Table 6.3: Interview questions to be conducted with SMH managers/owners consistent with research questions and objectives

Objective	Research question	Interview questions
1. To investigate how they view the significance of environmental practices for their business operations.	How do government staff view environmental problems relating to SMHs?	1. Have the SMHs in Nong Khai ever met environmental problems? 2. What is the evaluation index to be used in establishing the business?
2. To explore the government responsibility and what is the tourism situation involved with environmental issues.	How do government staff indicate their responsibility towards environmental problem and what is the situation of their responsibility with SMHs?	1. What is your responsibility towards environmental issue with the SMHs? 2. What is the current environmental situation?
3. To critically discover barriers to environmental practices for SMHs.	How government staff deal with the problems of SMHs?	1. How do you solve problems arising among SMHs and community or others? 2. How do you deal with businesses in order to comply with the regulations?

6.5 Pilot Study

6.5.1 The pilot study and gaining access

A pilot study to test the feasibility of the qualitative survey was carried out in May 2013. The respondents were found through networking with various local/ provincial government officers. The local government agency was particularly helpful in bringing the researcher into contact with the local SMHs. This pilot study was carried out 10th May- 5th June 2013, and during this period the researcher stayed at Nong Khai city and travelled to every district to search for additional key informants.

A process of ‘getting to know’ (important in Thai culture and social relations) the SMH owner/ managers was more time-consuming than anticipated. Originally, the researcher was expecting to gain quick and convenient access to the SMH owner/ managers at the interviewing stage. It was found that there are many new enterprises in Nong Khai city. Fortunately, social networks enabled access to senior local government staff (Chief of the Administration Branch). This person has contacts with local staff in every district office and his job related to the area of research interest. Additionally, the researcher is, in Thai social relations terms, ‘credible’ by social status as a lecturer at the Nong Khai campus of Khon Kaen University. Locals and Government staff regard this career position as respectable. This eased the researcher into getting to know those hotel managers/owners by official staff, which enhanced the researcher’s credibility with key informants.

The introduction stage took about six weeks: three parties (local officers, hotel owners/ managers and the researcher) attended the first official meeting. This was very significant. The researcher informed the businesses owners/ managers about the research background, and dealt with concerns over confidentiality of personal/ business information. Being familiar with the key informants arose by chance, but proved very beneficial. The pilot stage was mostly located in rural areas. The researcher had not met the hotel entrepreneurs before, although the researcher is a local, living in Nong Khai city. As the research took place in every district that had SMH businesses, the researcher could

not be familiar with every SMH and the area in the study frame. When first approaching local staff, the researcher learnt that the more the researcher become familiar with these people, the easier it was to find participants.

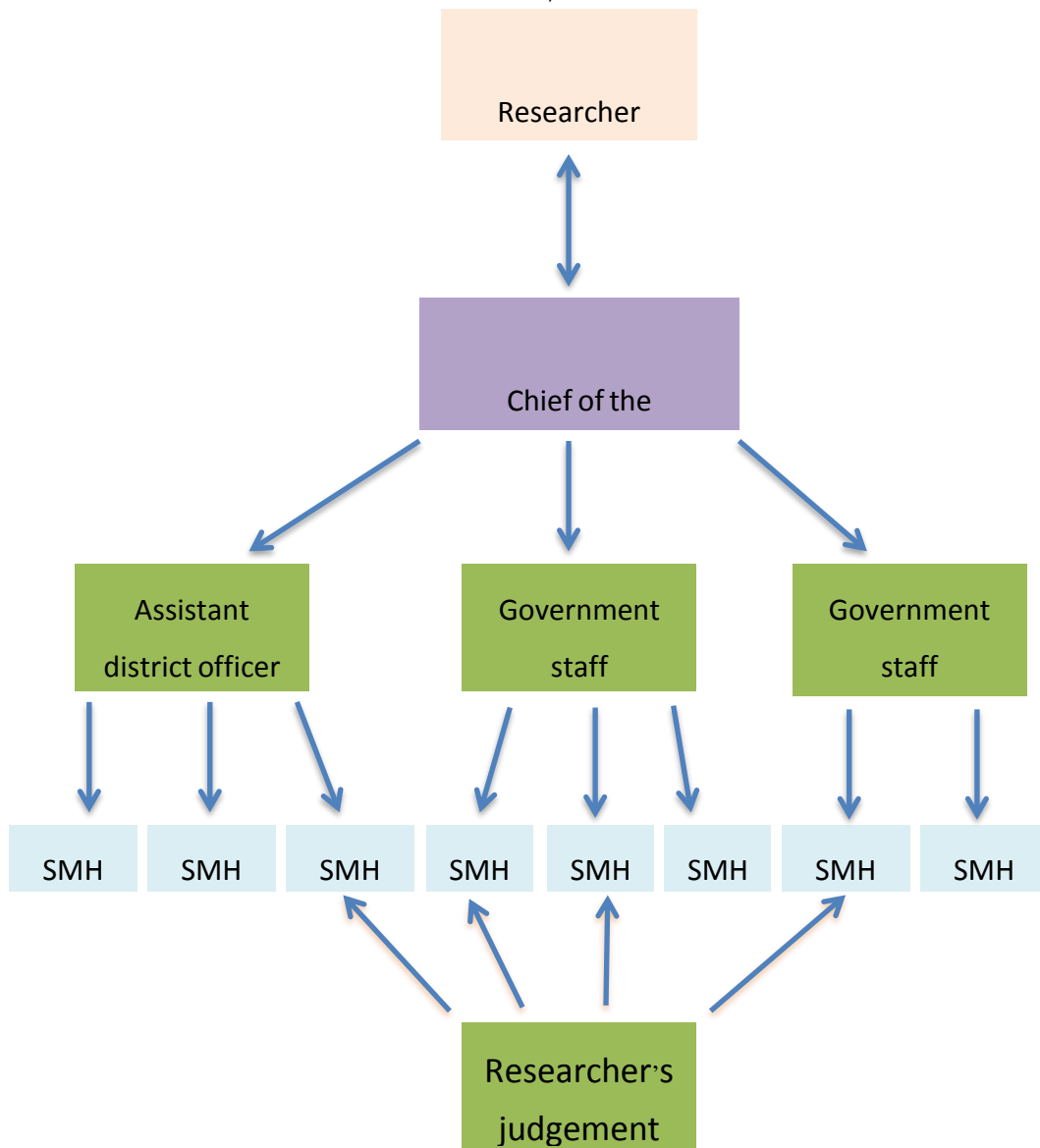
There were unexpected events during introduction visits, and the activities that the researcher had to be involved in did not relate to the research interest. Nonetheless, it was like community participation, as the locals and staff were inviting the researcher. It was the Buddhist lent day (the first day of the rainy season retreat) and there were some local activities taking place in every district. The researcher was encountering a week of delay, as the SMH businesses were busy during these events. Additionally, the researcher was invited by the district chief to survey his new tourist attraction. As the district chief is the high authority, the researcher must comply with his invitation. Due to Thai culture, when senior or higher social position inviting for something, it is important to respecting and accepting the invitation. As Thai society is taken account of 'stratification', the younger must behave respectfully to the older and senior position. In other words, there is a *Kreng Jai* feeling of the researcher. The district chief has got power and he is being respected by everyone, the researcher felt *Kreng Jai* for his kindness (see chapter4, Extension of *Kreng Jai* and Thai cultural perspectives). Although the researcher did not prefer to join because the event is not related to the research objective, telling the authority straightforward could disappoint his kind intention. The researcher managed to avoid conflict by accepting the invitation. However, becoming a guest of the district chief is beneficial to the researcher, and the local staff took the opportunity to introduce me to SMH firms as an official guest of the district office.

The activities taking place in the district were time-consuming, and the schedule of setting up the interview was delayed unintentionally. On the other hand, the researcher took advantage of this to observe the hotel firms, environment and their characteristics. By the time the researcher was staying in the district area (far away from the researcher's house), the researcher had gained easy access to communicate with locals and SMHs. This enhanced trust, familiarity, and understanding of the area context.

After the introduction, the researcher had to decide who was going to be studied in each area, as key informants were introduced by local district officers the first time. The local agents suggesting who seemed likely to cooperate. However, along with the researcher's own decisions, the local staff gave the researcher an idea of each SMH's background. The local staff introduced the researcher to every SMH business in three districts out of six, while Pon-Pi-Sai district and Sung-Kom district were met at a rate of 80 and 90 per cent. The only district with less coverage that this was the city centre (Muang district), which was less than 40 per cent because there is such a great number of SMH firms. The researcher asked local staff to help her to: 1) meet various business types, including old and new-built, full service and room only; 2) owners/ managers who are likely to participate; and 3) various SMHs in terms of their firm background: operational style, staff numbers and so on. The number of key informants was not important at this stage and the researcher wanted to start doing interviews after the pilot as soon as possible.

The method used in selecting the key informant is called 'purposive sampling', based on the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learnt (Merriam B and Tisdell J, 2015:96), as illustrated in figure 5.1.

Figure 6.1: Choosing the research respondents and the purposive sampling method in the pilot study



6.5.2 Reflection on the pilot study

The pilot study stage helped the researcher in many aspects before starting data collection. First of all, it helped identify an updated number of SMHs in Nong Khai city. The initial data were gathered from the National Statistical Office of Thailand, and updated numbers of registered SMHs was provided by local government. The latter is more up to date, and some of SMHs in the previous database are no longer running. Therefore, this gave an idea of which sources could reliably be used for the study.

It was recognised that the contacts made through the local government agencies were significant, because these contacts gave access to the SMH community, which otherwise would have been difficult. These contacts also gave the researcher credibility.

Working via local government staff build researcher's trust and reliability with the government staff and the hotel owner/ managers. The researcher's current position as lecturer at Khon Kaen University, Nong Khai campus is well known by locals and government agents. Although the researcher has personal contact with senior government staff (Chief of the Administration Branch), the researcher's occupation is also respectable. This could be indicated the Thai common attitude that *Kop kon parn parn par pai hha pid, kop bun dhit bun dhit par pai hha pon*. The culture that emphasises that Thai people believe in and trust educated persons (see chapter 4 of Thai characteristics in terms of cultural perspectives). This eased the researcher into gaining trust and reliability when the introduction came from central government office staff to district office staff.

The pilot gave the chance to be ready for the interview process. The stage of becoming familiar to the SMHs was more time-consuming than expected. Determining how to choose key informants who could give useful data was helped by suggestion from local government staff. A proper plan to start interviewing in each district was also constructed as a result of doing a pilot study. Additionally, the pilot study demonstrate how the research approach was shaped by recognising Thai cultural realities.

6.6 Main Study

6.6.1 One-to-one interviews

Interviews were carried out after the first introduction meeting based on the pilot study. The researcher contacted the key informants in person to determine whether they are available to be interviewed and face-to-face interviews were then set up. The interview locations and times were decided by the SMH owner/ managers, bearing in mind the researcher's limited interviewing time (45-60 minutes). Before interviewing, key informants were given consent forms and introduction letters, and an opportunity to question the researcher and seek clarification and assurances. Many interviews were longer than expected as the interviewees relaxed and enjoyed the opportunity to talk about their business. The interviews were conducted in Thai and a voice recorder and camera were employed to record the encounters.

The main data collection was divided into two periods. The first period was June and July 2013. There were ten key informants. The initial idea was to interview only SMH owner/ managers after introducing the researcher's study with an official introductory letter and obtaining signed permission of the participants. Nine of them were interviewed individually using the semi-structured interviews (the remaining one refused to be recorded). All the interviews were conducted in Thai as just one person was able to speak fluent English, therefore, all interviewing were conducted in Thai. The voice recording and note taking were later transcribed and analysed. The primary results emerged.

The second data collection was February-May 2014 and May 2015. However, the process of introduction to SMH owner/ managers was reproduced due to new key informants. An additional 11 SMH owners/manager were contacted plus eight government staff (one interview was conducted with two officials in the same government office), who were later interviewed because the researcher needed to tackle some related points with the ideas arising from the SMH owner/ managers.

In parallel with the first and second data collection interviews, was general observation. The researcher asked for a general familiarisation visit after the interview, an approach that received a positive reaction. Furthermore, the researcher chose to stay overnight at five SMH businesses in different areas.

All SMH owner/ managers were interviewed at their business locations. The interviews with government staff were conducted at their offices: one was interviewed at Nong Khai provincial office of tourism and sport, four were conducted at their offices, they are the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Municipality office of Nong Khai and the Environment and Conservation provincial office (Nong Khai), and the rest were conducted at the district office, in Nong Khai city. Each interview took 45-60 minutes, except two interviews with SMH owners, which lasted an hour and a half. Voice recording were transcribed afterwards.

6.7 Methodological Limitations

At the interviewing stage, there were some methodological limitations. However, fieldwork on-site troubles can happen at any time, and the researcher anticipated the challenge of unexpected events, hoping to solve them in an appropriate and timely way. The limitations are discussed below.

Confusion between managers and owners as to who was qualified to be interviewed when they are both playing significant roles in the businesses. In some SMH businesses, the owners and managers are the same person, but not always. This became a significant concern as a manager is officially governing the working atmosphere, while, the owner is influential for everyone in the firm. The researcher solved this conflict by asking them who is responsible for evaluating business activities and who is dominant in the working environment. Therefore, this on-site issue can be treated simply, as this study considers the most powerful person in terms of changing a firm's direction. Usually this was the manager, in mutual relationship with the owners.

Many firms do not have managers. Sometimes family members work together without, it seems, deciding who holds this position. In such cases, the SMH simply chose a family member to represent the business. The researcher then decided to interview these people, as they seemed likely to know the businesses activity and instruct the staff and other family members.

6.7.1 Data collection procedure and analysis

The researcher chose to analyse the data manually as a pragmatic and practical approach that also helped to immerse her in the data without the kind of digital intervention/ barrier characteristic of various analytical software packages.

The Thai language responses/ interviews were transcribed by the researcher. Time spent on the data also enabled in-depth reflection and started the process of theming. The data review also confirmed that conversations were accurately recorded. This stage was quite time-consuming, but there was no other proper way to re-check the key informants' statements.

At this juncture, the researcher confirmed the use of thematic analysis because of its reflexivity and ability to take account of researcher judgement, in order to tackle the key themes that emerge from the key informants and, in particular, terms they understand.

6.8 Particularity of Knowledge

Lewis (2001) describes particularism as being introduced initially by anthropologists in opposition to the existing research outcome paradigm, which expected scientific effort to result in 'generalisations' that could be applied elsewhere, especially in relation to offering empirical evidence to strengthen the prevailing Darwinian-derived idea that cultures evolved through similar stages, regardless of context. In this sense, particularism has remained somewhat controversial since the late nineteenth century. Franz Boas championed the idea through his search for individual phenomena, human choices, variation, diversity, and chance. In other words, not only the idea of cultural relativism,

but also specific phenomena that are not to be compared or ranked against other cultures, but viewed in their own right. Moreover, his view of culture was significantly attacked by the mainstream academy, since he emphasised that findings from the study of human culture generating universal laws was very doubtful. Culture is complex; it does not have to be about clarifying and categorising.

Many Western researchers look at the world searching for typologies and analysing data separately from where the object was first encountered, regardless of social and environmental influences (Nisbett, 2005). Boas suggesting that complex social life and subjects therein cannot be separated. This was the beginning of ‘particularism’ and in many ways the foundation of American anthropology (Lewis, 2001).

In the present study, the terminology of particularism (Bilton *et al.*, 2002; Leibowitz, 2009), particularization (Stake, 1995), particularistic (Merriam, 2009), particularity or particularities (Dreier, n.d.; Ojakangas, 2014) are used interchangeably by scholars. The term ‘particularistic’ is also introduced along with case studies, due to its specific characteristics based on qualitative study, as it shares ‘uniqueness’. The first emphasis is on understanding, which is the same in qualitative study (Stake, 1995: 8). It is important for what it reveals about the phenomenon and for what it might represent. Such an approach can be conducted with ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973). ‘Thick description’ is the recording of fieldwork results and findings that explain incidents being investigated and their entire situation. In other words (Stake, 1995), the emphasis is on description of things, e.g. places, events, and people; not only commonplace description but ‘thick description’ (p. 102). This is used by social anthropologists for case studies, highlighting the controversial nature of generalising qualitative, field-based findings.

Stake (1994) argues that it is not always sure that a case study will tell the story completely on its own as interpretive study find out meaning of people being studied. The reader from the complete study cannot know at the outset what the perceptions or theory will be. Therefore, a researcher anticipates certain events and problems and the case content evolves through the act of writing. However, the researcher decides what is necessary for

an understanding of the case. The complete research aim is also depended on researcher's interest and the funding agencies purpose which cannot be told the whole story of its area.

Dreier (no date) compared generalizability and particularity in terms of depersonalized knowledge, with generalizability using variables in decontextualized ways. Findings are isolated and generalising is based on the idea of 'when x then y' and phenomena remain unaffected by changes in other respects. In a social process, together they bend, spin, consolidate, and enrich understandings (Patton, 2011: 164). The researcher comes to know what has happened partly in terms of what others reveal as their experience. The researcher emerges from one social experience, the observation, to choreograph another, the report. Knowledge is socially constructed and thus case study researchers assist readers in the construction of knowledge (Stake, 1998: 95 [online]).

Trompenaars (1993 see Broda, 2014) argue that particularistic culture is made logical and reasonable, creating a reality that shows a true sense of relation rather than upholding a depersonalized universal principle. Knowledge gained from understanding the in-depth aspect of relationship, which may culturally influence the people being studied.

Broda (2014) exemplified the particularistic in Chinese in comparison with German and US staff relationships in organisations by suggesting two elements that emerge in organisation culture. The relationship-oriented cultures pointed to the people with whom they work, while task-oriented cultures emphasised technical and logical coherence. The former is obviously the Chinese, while the US and German cultures are shown in the latter. While task-orientation leads to solving a conflict through logical controversy and factual compromises, a relationship-oriented group will try to solve problems by improving the relationship. Loyalty and integrity are seen as more important than technical competence. A relationship orientation is the result of collectivism and particularism. A particularistic culture has a significant influence on organisational behaviour. Any task management for Eastern people such as the Chinese relies heavily on relationships. It is concerned with how businesses manage environmental practices in their daily routine.

In the scientific paradigm and social world, law and knowledge can be generated by different approaches. However, generalisation and particularity can now be seen as parallel approaches to resolving research problems. Particularity reflects social practice, as it is complex and involves human behaviour. Behaviour is influenced by culture, where context-bounded and grounded by environment and culture that made human beings distinct from other creatures (Hofstede, 1981; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). In the present study, a qualitative approach towards cultural understanding is used, which fits well with the ‘particularity’ approach. As Dreier (n.d.: 7) states, “the craft of research is not isolated and cannot be understood and regulated methodically in isolation.”

Additionally, Campbell (in Stake, 1995: 439), “Damage occurs when the commitment to generalize or create theories runs so strong. Researcher’s attention is drawn away from features important for understanding the case itself.” Such features can address in-depth understanding and detail, rather than focusing on general preferences. Even generalisation itself cannot ensure that all findings are represented entirely as a researcher may find what they want to see. Dreier (no date) argues that,

Generalised outcomes may thereby gain many particular impacts, outcomes which researchers assess to be merely particulars may even be picked up and generalised in practice by users. It is in fact, less obvious than in the research literature that generalisation is the name of the game in the uses of research findings. Uses are particular and selective regardless of whether findings are general or not. (p. 6)

As mentioned above, the present study took place in Nong Khai city with a specific target group of SMHs. The study of culture in an Eastern country could be seen as leading to particularistic conclusions, as the focus is on specific societies (in the sense of a target group) and what has interacted with them in a particular area. How do SMHs manage their environmental practices? What are SMHs actually doing regarding environmental programmes? Are their environmental practices influenced by culture? (See tables 5.3 and 5.4) In terms of data collection, qualitative research should be understood by giving the detail about the context of study, incorporating data with existing literature and

should explain similarities. The researcher will follow Geertz in providing thick description, which involves gathering data in rich detail (e.g. events, people, environment, related features) and describing the context of the study setting for other researchers.

6.9 Mode of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a means to organise the data from qualitative studies. It is a process of identifying, organising, analysing and reporting patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 6), a theme refers to a specific pattern found in the data, in which one is interested (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 58). The aim is to understand the latent meaning of manifest themes observable within the data that require interpretation.

Several themes can emerge from the data collected during the process. In other words, data emerges from existing theoretical ideas or from the raw information itself (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 59). Thus the results permit the researcher to replicate, extend or refute prior discoveries (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 82), theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (all the data from the corpus that is being used for a particular analysis).

Joffe and Yardley (2004) argue that researchers create conceptual tools to classify and understand the phenomenon under study: this involves abstracting from the massive detail arising from complex data those features salient for the research purpose. This is done by taking chunks of text and labelling them as falling into certain categories, in a way that allows for later retrieval and analysis of the data, which is categorised by theme. In order to do this, the patterns are labelled as aspects of the content, confirmed through organising the data into themes. The nuances of the high frequency, themes are explored in depth (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 63).

Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that there is no hard-and-fast answer to the question of what proportion of a data set needs to display evidence of the theme for it to be considered a theme. A theme may give noticeable space in some data items and little or

none in others. The significance is a researcher judgement, which needs to be reflexive. The researcher's judgement is taken strictly when data has obviously reached the saturation point, or is repeated obviously enough to be evidence. The result is displayed within the research questions by ensuring that the researcher has appropriate evidence to show.

6.9 Limitations

6.9.1 Distractions during interviewing

Given that part of the data gathering was observation of the SMHs and that it was essential to conduct the interviews in a relaxed environment, key informants were seen at their firms. However, while this was logical and came from good intentions, it did mean that owner/ managers were distracted by demands from their staff, especially given that most of the interviews were in office hours. As the top authority, key informants seemingly felt obliged to respond to requests. That said, it is in the nature of this management position and thus understandable. The researcher let the key informants deal with inquiries until they were ready to get back to the interview. It was clear that the key informants felt apologetic about pausing the recordings. However, the researcher did not show frustration or negative feelings.

6.9.2 Time management and availability

The researcher wanted to control the interviewing time so that it lasted 45-60 minutes, this being judged as the appropriate time range for information exchange. However, there were still some cases where conversations lasted more than 90 minutes. The researcher did not feel it appropriate to stop the flow as the interviewees were enjoyed telling their story. So the researcher let the process go on and carefully checked whether it was suitable to stop. Fortunately, the main questions were answered in proper time, which the

researcher was really concerned to keep the issue within the time limit, so as not to inconvenience the interviewees.

6.9.3 Distance

Due to the research area, key informants and their businesses are settled away from the city centre. The researcher was focused on ensuring visits to every district, so as to get a mix of countryside and town enterprises. Therefore, it was time-consuming to get to the SMH owner/managers (and relatively expensive). With some areas over 80 miles away, the research could only do one interview per day, with little contingency for unexpected events, for example, delay in gaining access to the key informant so that the researcher had to wait, because the key informant cannot promise to start interview on time. Some journeys in the rainy season were dangerous, causing further delays of an hour or more. In some cases, the interviewee had made an appointment but then cancelled immediately on arrival, so that the researcher had to reschedule with the key informants.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed and explained the methods of enquiry used in the investigation and, in particular, the fieldwork methods. The main research instrument used was interviews. An interpretive paradigm operating with qualitative methods was used to attempt to gain an understanding of the motivation of SMH owner/managers and their understanding of environmental initiatives conducted in the businesses.

This chapter has explored and evaluated the use of particularity and snowball sampling techniques. Data collection methods (semi-structured interviews and observation) and the use of thematic analysis have been discussed. The pilot study and main data collection procedure have been explored. The main themes of the findings arising from thematic analysis are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 7:

Results

7.1 Introduction

This chapter reports, analyses, and discusses the main themes that emerged from the research. In particular, it focuses on the perspectives of small and medium-sized hotel (SMH) owner/managers. It aims to indicate the motivations that drive SMH owner/managers to run their accommodation business, their attitude towards environmental management and the culturally driven attitudes that have influence on a collective country like Thailand. This chapter is presented in three main sections: the general understanding of business characteristic in Nong Khai; business motivation; and, perception of environmental issues (awareness of environmental problems and hotel business, managing the business, and sense of responsibility).

7.2 Small and Medium-sized Hotel Characteristics in Nong Khai

7.1.2 General understanding of business definitions

While SMHs in Nong Khai share some characteristics with SMEs and SMHs in other countries, it should be noted from the outset that these hotels are indeed ‘small’. This significant definitional discrepancy is reflected in the hotel service type. For example, SMHs in Nong Khai including the term ‘resort’ or ‘hotel’ cannot be assumed to provide the same amenities or facilities as its name denotes. For example, ‘the AAA resort’ does not mean that this accommodation is located near a beach or mountain. It can be found in

town, on a very small plot with no amenity for activities (for example, in figure 7.1). Moreover, SMHs do not even always provide breakfast. Meanwhile, accommodation described with the word ‘hotel’ does not necessarily indicate full service such as a restaurant as generally understood, for example, in the United Kingdom. Finally, the word ‘inn’ or ‘bungalow’ and simple words of Thai language are often used for hotel names also, such as *Baan* (house), *Rai* (farm) or *Suan* (garden) and so forth.

Figure 7.1: A resort located in a small plot and in the SMH owner's house



7.1.3 What is meant by SMHs?

In terms of registration for hotel businesses in Nong Khai, the National Statistic Office of Thailand (NSO) has a definition of hotel size that is distinct from the municipality Act. The latter indicates SMHs as accommodation with between 4 and 79 rooms, whereas the NSO defines an hotel as an establishment with between 1 and 49 rooms as ‘small’, and hotels with between 50 and 149 rooms as ‘medium’-sized, while properties of more than 150 rooms are classified as large. However, the NSO hotel definition is used for national collection and statistical data, while the municipality Act is for legal registration that forms the basis for tax revenues and annual assessment. Many Nong Khai hotels are registered by Nong Khai Municipality as SMHs, because hotels defined as ‘large’ have more complex regulation. For example, large hotels must apply for Environmental Impact Assessment

(EIA) to be legally built. The EIA will cost the developer £16,000 for each property. This may explain, to some extent, why there are just three large hotels in Nong Khai out of 101 registered properties, with the rest registered as SMHs.

From table 7.1, it can be seen that SMHs in Nong Khai have a very small number of rooms per business; more than 50 per cent have less than 21 rooms.

Table 7.1: Hotels in Nong Khai divided by the number of rooms

Rooms per establishment	Number of establishments
4-20	55
21-30	20
31-40	8
41-50	4
51-60	3
61-70	2
70-79	2
>79	3
Total	101

Source: District Office of Nong Khai, 2014

Nong Khai is divided into nine districts, with 98 SMHs legally registered. However, there is a lot of illegal accommodation in Nong Khai that apparently run in the city (Y. Promson, interview, 20 February, 2014). The room rate can be separated into two rates, a three-hour (day) rate, and overnight stay. A three-hour (day) rate is a short stay rate, cheaper than the overnight stay rate by 40 to 50 per cent. The purposes are varied; for example, salesman dropping by for a quick nap, or a place to meet for a couple to have sex. However, it is

discernible from a hotel's location and appearance what services are available in each place.

7.1.4 Hotel location and staff

Observation from the fieldwork revealed many interesting perspectives. Almost all SMHs in rural sites are built on the owners' land, which already existed before starting the business (figure 6.2). Many, but not all, SMH owners work both in housekeeping and a managerial position and are normally involved with other hotel activities. This is especially the case in suburban areas. The functions of city SMHs are similar to any general hotel business and include finance, housekeeping, security and so forth, but not many SMHs have clearly separated the functions among staff members and at least one person will operate two jobs. SMH businesses are run by owner/ managers. Staff are mostly neighbours and family members. These are most often found in suburban areas; while city centre hotels have mixed characteristics, e.g. staff are generally from a small village nearby the town. Overall, the SMHs have limited numbers of staff, up to 15 in each, while the urban SMHs have staffing levels of up to 55 people (in fact this was the highest staff number found in Nong Khai SMHs). However, the high staffing levels vary by tourism season in the city. Moreover, the majority of SMHs hire fewer than ten people. These staff are less educated, because many positions in the hotel are considered manual labour jobs. To some extent this saves the businesses money, as the lower the education, the lower the wage. These sorts of low paid positions include housekeeping, waiter/ waitress and security.



Figure 7.2: A resort situated within the owner's area

7.2 Business Motivation

7.2.1 Family lifestyle

For the purpose of analysis and contextualising a family's growth and future, their lifestyle can be categorised into three sub-themes. First, the prospect of a professional career and general future, second, to utilise their own land by seeing it as an economic asset rather than just the place they live, and third, the idea of a business opportunity for themselves and intergenerational flow of family assets and opportunity. Each of these is now explained in more detail.

(i) Family members' career and future

Responsibility for the family's happiness is the major concern for parents. Some hotel owners stated that they want to have something for their children after finishing university. For example, RF10 claimed that:

“We are a big family, my parent and my aunts are close and they want to do something for their children. I am quite sure that more than 80 per cent having the similar reason to do this business. They consider that their children could not want to do their parent's job. As their parent work was about merchant, very simple thing. They have sent their children to high(er) education, so, who wants to be just a merchant in the market? Working in grocery shop at the old market is not possible. This is why they invest for this hotel business.”

RF10 is the child for whom the hotel business was established in the family. The parents wanted to assure themselves their children would have a good social position. An accommodation firm is seen as special, an upgrade of social status. Parents take responsibility for their children's future success, especially those who are close to their children. This view is shared by RF5, who revealed that she started her SMH for her children as she has only daughters and does not want them to be far away. Once they finish university, she wants them to be gathered into her business, though her previous job is not related to the accommodation sector at all.

Some managers revealed that they just want their wives to have a job. For example, RF8's statement:

“I have to do this because of my husband and my daughter in particular. My only child is sick, she is needed special care all the time. I cannot do [an] other job like rubber tapper, so my husband has decided [on] this business for me, actually also for our family.”

It can be seen that running an accommodation firm is thought to be a good business. Family is very important factor, which has influenced decision- making, a collective activity for family purposes, particularly when a member needs special attention.

(ii) To have something to do in their own land

Many managers stated that they were looking for a business to do on their own land, which would be easy to set up and look after. RF6 stated:

“My previous career was inconvenient for me, as I was forced to travel and move far away from my family and my house, it was terrible. Me and my wife were very thoughtful; finally, I decided to quit and start this business. This land is big enough, apart from our house, it is big and in [a] great location just by the main road, so we do it. We don't know much about setting up this business, but, I don't think this is impossible; I can look after it 24 hours as it's in our land.”

From the statement above, doing hotel business is motivated by personal reason, which is not related to knowledge or background. Many respondents revealed that they think this business is deemed easy, like a grocery shop. For example RF10 states:

“That accommodation firm sounds easy; it is just the room and let to somebody to rent for night, what we initially thought was just [a] simple thing. We don't absolutely know about administration, service, and even human resource management. We experience these ourselves. That's why now we have to hire [a] professional manager to teach us and to work for us.”

The statements above showed that the background is not linked to their knowledge or education, particularly for the founders. Their personal intention is very likely focused on their home and land. Birthplace is significantly influential due to familiarity. This is shared by RF15, who explained that she lives with her mother. Having enough land, she does not want to move and she wants to do something in her hometown, though she travels very frequently.

Moreover, something in the hotel sector is not only business that they have; some informants have many different businesses, due to availability of budget and personal

interest. For instance, RF9 claimed that the owner has as the main business construction stores in many cities. This hotel business is not her concern at all; the owner leaves all management jobs in her hands. The owner does not even visit her business; she only comes once a year.

7.2.2 Social position

Social position is a reason that can be found commonly. Social level in Thailand is significant, as it helps people to deal easily with others. Social level is easily discerned by education, prosperity and career. Having a good education is highly respected and likely to have more opportunity in society, e.g. connection. Career and education are, unsurprisingly, linked, and having a high position in an organisation such as a government department or private company is very respected.

This seems very common to many countries; however, Thais are very careful about making problems with those in the higher social level. It is generally known in Thai society that these high social classes are powerful. They are connected by money and power, linked with high positions in government organisation (the patron–client system). Moreover, there is a *Kreng Jai* feeling when encountering with higher social class people.

Having a service business like accommodation leads to better social class, as they can be called ‘owner-entrepreneur’, which is better than ‘merchant’. As RF18 mentioned:

“I don’t know what to say, there are [...] many reasons, but being [the] owner of something is a good thing, isn’t it? People know you, as having business, you are a boss. They call me boss, not just [his name]. I have previously had [a] business, when I have to do other [things] that should be my own firm too. I also don’t like to be ordered, I want to be myself, I am an owner.”

To change social status from one’s current social position to a lower social status is embarrassing, because it means loss of social stability. Stability means prosperity and employment. Doing business to help lifting one’s social level is very important to show

one's ability, and the chance to reach the social class of powerful people opens if they own something. This is discussed by RF10 and RF13; they do not like being farmers or general sellers: they want to own something. Being a business owner is seen as synonymous with being educated. People believe that once they are rich, they gain social connections and access to upper society.

7.2.3 Business opportunities

Emerging business opportunities is the logical reason that can be found for starting some SMHs. The growth in Thailand's tourism is one of the motivating factors to develop this enterprise. Demand for overnight stays by visitors who travel for personal business and journey regularly, such as sales people, was a previous entrepreneurial motivation, especially when linked to the availability of finance and available property. As observed by RF2:

“Initially, this accommodation was an old house; later we let it to someone to run as a guesthouse, it's also recommended in [the] Lonely Planet guidebook. That's very successful; when the contract finished, we then run this business by ourselves.”

While starting a hotel business was one of the reasons for investment, the decision was influenced by friends and family as an influencer on decision-making; many locals were encouraged by others that positively supported their decision. Though they are not knowledgeable in management, they felt they could operate in local conditions and with local knowledge. As RF14 stated, she did not know anything about this sort of service. But because of her access to land and finance, she took the suggestions of friends and locals to open a small hotel because there was no accommodation within the area. It can be clearly seen that when setting up a hotel business, tourism-related purposes are not necessarily the major factor for business owners. The starting point is land ownership and the driving motivation is prestige seeking.

At this juncture, findings from observation and interviewing show that almost all SMHs did not mention about tourism-related aspects. Once they were asked they only mentioned about the travel period during the end of Buddhist lent, when domestic travellers from everywhere are coming over to see Naga fire phenomenon in Nong Khai. That period is exceptionally busy and occupancy rates in hotels very high.

7.3 Perceptions of Environmental Issues

Environmental issues, as manifested by changing weather patterns such as shorter winter and longer summer seasons, and higher temperatures, are the most commonly observed changes. All the informants observed change of air temperature and felt that temperature is higher than in previous years. They frame the problem in terms of where they live, and how it directly affects them. They are aware of global change, through print, broadcast, and digital media. When asked about relevance to their business, some saw a connection, but others did not. Such responses can be divided to two sub-themes. First, awareness of environmental problem related to hotel business (6.3.1); and second, irrelevance of environmental problem to hotel business (6.3.2).

7.3.1 Awareness of environmental problems and hotel business

Informants acknowledge that in their daily lives, they feel the increased temperature; they understand that their lives are affected and many informants stated that the temperature change also impacts their business. RF4 and RF7 explained, respectively:

“I can feel a change of global warming; I can feel from the temperature, it's very hot now. If you ask me about impact to my customer, I can answer no not to them, but it affects [...] my business in terms of electricity bill[s] directly. It has [been this was for] been several years.”
(RF4)

“It is too hot for tourists to travel, for example, that outside seating area cannot be seated at noon, so our guests just only sit inside; then we must

turn on the air-conditioning for them [for the] entire day, because they are so many guests inside. The season is unpredictable; recently, tourists don't want to be disappointed, so they just change to other touristic routes.” (RF7)

It can be said that informants' perceptions are linked directly to the impacts they observe. They also mention that the cause of the environmental problem is from human's actions in relation to forests, and large industry. They see that any activity can cause environmental problems.

7.3.2 Irrelevance of environmental problem and hotel business.

Individuals can be affected by environmental issues; owners/ managers see a gradual change in weather, such as an increasingly long hot season. They feel it at the personal level, but not systematically/ ecologically. As RF3 claimed:

“I heard that news about [the] environment but I don't think it affects [...] my customers, they just pay and stay and then leave. Me [sic.] and my staff have to check immediately they leave, so I think we are okay for this right now. We are fortunate as we have loads of trees nearby, global warming is not yet happened to our place.”

As he pointed out, as long as his business is able to provide services to clients, the problem will not be taken seriously. Visible problems such as dirty air and traffic noise are obviously more important to them in terms of guest satisfaction. For example, RF11 stated that Nong Khai is still very beautiful in comparison to Bangkok; high temperatures are acceptable and the hotel locations are not problematic. Electricity and water are basic facilities that hotel managers are not so concerned about, because of these facilities are used by everybody. Moreover, many SMHs conduct resources as household usage. They do not think that they will be the cause of reducing environmental resource use.

7.4 Managing Business Resources

Many SMH managers and owners observed that their use of resources such as electricity and water are as normal and comparable to household usage. They point out electrical equipment similar to that owned by individuals, and the water systems are same as in a private house. They did not mention the amount of energy used in the businesses. Therefore, they treat sewage and rubbish just in a private house. Moreover, they are not bothered by guests' consumption of energy, which is also about avoiding conflict. Even if guests were to be told to consume less, it would be considered on a case by case basis. These cases are categorised as follows: (i) Familiarity strategy; (ii) guest is uncontrollable; and (iii) nationality matters.

7.4.1 Familiarity strategy

As noted above, SMHs in Nong Khai are generally run by family members, and an owner is also often acting as a manager. Staff members are normally relatives and neighbours. Some SMHs are run along professional business lines, with separate departments, e.g. housekeeping, food and beverage, and accounting. However, these are still run by family members. In terms of implementing environmental strategy, these close relationships led to a flexible working atmosphere. Thais are very flexible in dealing with work performance; they do not want to work in a serious or rule-dominated environment. The way they reduce tension in working place is by being friendly and kind. Particularly in SMH firms, staff and owners are familiar with each other, so they increase trust. The business environments are not complicated. Owner/ managers believe that staff would only help them reducing energy consumption, and there is no reason that staff would avoid saving energy. Therefore, these relationships are more important than professional performance. RF8 and RF16 state this below, respectively:

RF8: "My staff are neighbours and my older sister, here we have just [a] housekeeping section. We don't have [a] restaurant, we are just a small business."

Question: Have you consider their [the staff] action towards energy saving?

RF8: "I think they know, they don't have to do anything much, the job is not complicated, when the client is out. They just go to check and switch off everything. Sometimes I help her clean up, so we share the opinion as we know what to do."

RF16: "I have known my staff for such a long time, they are family, I think they have grown to know how to use the water and the electricity to the minimum unit. I think we all conceive this issue, sometimes they fail, doesn't mean that they are intended to do it; just a minimal mistake, we all can forget. This is forgivable."

7.4.2 Relationship with guests

For Thai culture, especially, in the service businesses, guests are very important. The idiom *Pra Pay Nee Thai Thae Tae Bo Run, Krai Mar Thueng Ruen Chan Tong Torn Rub* means 'It is Thai culture that any guest is always very welcome'; therefore, guests can do no wrong. In other words, it can be said that whenever Thais have guests, they must take good care of the guests and not disappoint them during their stay. Therefore, service is significant, and the satisfaction of guests is vital. Making guests happy is to show how good the host is, and also avoids the host being *Sia Nhar* (losing face) (Intachakra, 2012). Provided that the host takes good care of his/her guests, the guests would feel *Kreng Jai* to say anything bad. Thus, many SMHs consider clients the most special person in the service business. As RF12 said:

"We are able to get to the room in order to [do the] cleaning, but, the guest must be telling us. Due to their privacy, they might know or not know that they have switched the electricity on. Though we know, it could be their intention to do that. We have no right to turn [it] off."

In addition, telling the guest something straightaway is acceptable for Thai people, in a decent manner, as they believe that having a good relationship would help them

communicate easily. This shows that Thai people prefer to make sure that whatever they say does not threaten the listener's feelings towards them, because they are so relationship-oriented (Runglertkengkrai and Engkaninan, 1987). Owner/ managers of Thai SMHs avoid speaking directly as they wish to make the listener feel comfortable. Additionally, this advice depends on the relationship between staff/ host and customers. This means official interaction between guest and staff is not effective until they get used to each other. For example, RF14 illustrated this:

“I reckon, do I have to force the guests to do so really? I'm afraid that they could blame me. But if the customers are familiar to me, because they come quite frequently [then it is easier]. So before they [are] leaving the room. I can say [something] like, ‘hey sister, don't forget to switch off everything please’. I mean, if they stay many days, then I am able to tell them [things like this].”

The staff in SMHs do not have explicit information introducing the clients to the idea of saving energy. Moreover, asking for cooperation depends on the situation, especially when the guests encounter the staff in person. Thai people prefer to see their interlocutor face-to-face and are careful to speak gently, with polite body language. The term *Kreng Jai* was used by many SMHs, showing concern for staff and customer behaviour regarding towards energy usage in the hotel. Thais are afraid to risk their friendship with others, as RF16 stated:

“It is very often [that] I have found that guests didn't turn off stuff. Though they leave, they [are] just ignoring [this]. [...] Let's say some of them become friends and loyal customers. Whether they check-in or check-out, they usually greet me. For these typical clients, they are aware and Kreng-Jai; then they look after the room for me.”

The relationship between guests and hosts/staffs can be understood as similar to a friend or member of a family. SMHs' attitudes are positive and flexible towards clients, who are

considered to be more than just customers. They are generous to each other, trusted and *Kreng Jai*, as RF16 says:

“My guests normally stay two nights at least; we become familiar and many of them come back here again and again. They are like my family, they sometime buy food for me. The more they know me for a long time, the [more] Kreng-Jai they are. They always say, ‘Sister, you don’t have to clean up my room, don’t change my towel, it costs your expenses. I am Kreng-Jai.”

Generally, the feeling of SMH managers towards general guests’ behaviour is quite negative. They cannot expect green behaviour from clients. They realized that saving energy is crucial for business, but even when the guests do not help them, still they have no idea how to make them more aware of energy consumption. However, they mention that a familiar relationship between hotel staff and guests could really improve environmental behaviours in the hotel sector by collaborating with customers.

7.4.3 Guests are persuadable

Many SMHs do not want their guests to take responsibility for the conservation of energy. They are most concerned about customers’ satisfaction. In other words, the tourism industry is very sensitive; accommodation businesses do not want to take risks. SMHs are also unsure that all guests understand the need for tourists to participate in energy saving. That is why SMHs take all the responsibility. This is shown by RF5’s view:

We cannot tell them to save the power/energy in the room because we are service persons. If we do so, some guests could understand while others could not. It is very personal, they know what to do and they will do [it], but for some if they don’t realize, we still cannot blame them. It is our responsibility to handle it all.

Asking clients to saving energy in their room is very unusual for some SMHs. Some SMHs believe that guests have the privilege to spend what they have paid for their room. The

concern over environmental problem has been left behind satisfaction. Furthermore, the response to requests to consider energy reduction varies in individual behaviour. As RF3 illustrated:

It is very personal, [it] depends on personal attitude. This is [a] hotel, not a high school that customers are required for being concerned and saving for energy use in the room. This is uncontrollable; I cannot cut their rights of being customers. This is not about us; it's about their behaviour. We are just responsible for their satisfaction.'

7.4.4 Nationality matters

International tourists are not the main travellers that come to Nong Khai. However, there are some SMHs which mentioned behaviour between Thai and *Farang* (international tourists with blond hair, i.e. Westerners). *Farang* are more concerned with energy saving. For example, RF2 stated:

Farang tourists usually separate rubbish which [is] easy for us to collect. For example, they use soap and shampoo until they are run out, but Thais use them day to day and I have to replace a new one, though the recent stuffs haven't run out. There are only a few Thais that do like those international guests, but very few numbers, I could recall them.

Some SMHs stated that Thais are not so worried about their resource use in the hotel; they would not want to blame them. Guests of any nationality have the right to spend their time how they like in their room.

7.5 Sense of Responsibility

Many managers and owners express their feelings on environmental problems that they are aware of and wish to fix as it could save them money. Saving management cost is the most mentioned by the SMHs in order to implement environmental practice. However, they mostly claimed that conducting environmental management could cost them money

in terms of financial capital and they believed that the most practical way to save environmental resources is by installing high-tech such as electrical control key cards, or solar panels on their roof. RF19 and RF4 described this, respectively:

“I do know [about] the solar roof, it is alternative energy. But [strongly accent] it is very expensive. My hotel is very small, for energy use, I don’t think it cost much expense to me, I mean nowadays, it is acceptable. Well, our country does not have this many, doesn’t it? [wondering]”

“I did think about using Solar cells, but it’s not worth to replace many stuffs. Moreover, when something is broken, the hotel will immediately close for fixing this whole thing.”

Electric control key cards are generally used in larger hotels, but a number of SMH businesses in Nong Khai do not invest in this, indicating that they cannot afford extra equipment; this technology is not the first priority of financial investment.

SMHs believe that technological equipment can help save energy. However, they felt that they themselves have not contributed to environmental destruction, and this is why they are not worried about environmental management. Also, the scale of a small hotel in comparison to both the scale of pollution and the massive amount of money it would cost to install new technology was a factor. Neighbours have not blamed SMH businesses for environmental pollution. Furthermore, many SMHs have similar waste disposal to general households. They viewed that the businesses have similar functions to a residential establishment.

However, when they were asked to who can solve environmental problems, they gave responsibility to (i) government and (ii) collective action, as detailed below

7.5.1 Government responsibility

SMHs understand the role of authority and culture dictates that they generally respect it. Therefore, the mind-set is that responsibility lies with institutional authorities such as government. The SMHs are most concerned with their family happiness. They daily lives

are navigated by the sufficiency economy (Mongsawad, 2010) (similar concept with Buddhism not too much, not too little), particularly in suburban areas. The sufficiency economy is based on Buddhism and teaches followers to be humble, respectful and live in harmony with nature. RF19 and RF16 describe this, respectively:

Thais [have grown] with rice-field[s] and nature. That is our culture. Our environment is absolutely rice-field[s] and trees that have given us clean air, raining season. Therefore, our culture and nature are entirely being together.

We are self-sufficient, not modernized at all, I don't want to be like others. I am afraid of [...] problems that come with high technology. Our family is taught to live simply. We don't use pesticide[s], our rice fields are very productive.

A simple lifestyle and the sufficiency economy concept govern SMHs in the countryside. To solve the environmental problems, they look to the government, as RF6 and RF11 say below, respectively:

"I think [that the] government should regulate the law and working on it seriously. Like Singapore, the city is very clean, if Thailand government really optimize[d], everybody must then follow."

"We must be led by national government down to local unit. If we wanted sustainable tourism, every stakeholder must take part. However, for me we are part of the development. We must encourage and motivate the local agent[s]. Our duty is addressing the problems. If SMHs are responsible, this is called private project, right?"

SMHs see themselves apart from the problem and leave responses and duty to others. Thais are taught to be humble, and they will not act if they do not feel they have the authority. The government is seen in a position of seniority, and they should take the first steps. As RF10 pointed out:

“Currently, we [depend] on our customers. If the government does force us to employ the environmental practices or asking for cooperation from guests, we will surely do it, but [for] now let's think about profitability.”

7.5.2 Collective action

Many SMHs took the view that humans cause environmental problems. People are responsible for these problems in collective action. SMHs also emphasised that individuals cannot solve the problem. For Thais, standing out a group is not a common thing; they are conscious of gossip. Therefore in terms of environmental problem responsibility, they understand that the environment is big, so they feel that they cannot treat environmental troubles on their own. SMHs mentioned that this would be achieved through collective action. For instance, RF4 said:

“In terms of reducing global warming, one or two people cannot [handle] it, everybody has to realize that any electrical stuff need to be switched off when it's not in use. Though, the guests have already paid [for] the room, they must have consciousness [emphasized]. We cannot [...] do it while they are staying.”

In addition, religious beliefs dominated the SMHs' worldview, with the sufficiency economy and the king's economic theory teaching that people must live in harmony and be self-sufficient. SMHs feel that solutions to environmental problems can only be address in small ways. They see themselves as very tiny. As RF14 says,

“As my ability, we get up every day [and] we must think about how much we can do, what capability we have. That tells us if it is over capability, we will not be able to manage. Just do what we can do.”

SMHs are willing to take part if leaders and local government take the first step. SMHs are generally run by locals living in the area for a long time. Their perspectives are formed and expressed through the mixed influences of entrepreneurialism and being local. Some

SMHs link environmental impact to their businesses, while many do not see a relationship. There are some differences between rural SMHs and urban SMHs: the rural SMHs consider the business based on religious concept of ‘not too much, not too little’; urban city SMHs are running businesses on the concept of ‘living in harmony with others’ by not interfering with what they see as customers’ rights.

7.6 Limitations of Implementation

The concept of sustainable tourism, particularly in various environmental practices in SMHs in Nong Khai city, seems far behind global actions. Environmental practices are not well understood and there is no official manual to guide SMHs. Along with Nong Khai SMH characteristics, e.g. being a family run business, small numbers of rooms, and their personal perspectives as described above. It can be seen that there are barriers particular to SMH businesses.

7.6.1 Attitudes

(i) Attitude towards building materials

The fieldwork revealed that the Thai attitude towards building material is one of the barriers to conserving natural resources. To show a luxurious design and interior, wood is valuable for decorating, as it is rare and expensive. Thai notions about using ‘instant’ wood or recycled material are very unusual, and those new innovative materials are also exclusive. They would rather choose the former than the latter in order to appear authentic. Otherwise, basic materials would only be chosen by SMHs.

SMHs are not concerned about building materials. However, using energy- saving equipment would save business costs. Therefore, SMHs select energy-saving products (e.g. refrigerators, televisions and water heaters) for financial reasons. The price of these goods is not so different from other electrical products, so that they can afford them. Additionally, technology like electric control key cards (as mentioned above) is not widely use in SMHs in Nong Khai due to the installation cost. Moreover, Nong Khai SMHs are very

small family businesses. Hotel businesses are mostly on the owners' land close to their homes, and therefore, their initial idea of building structures is similar to the household functions. Many SMHs are not knowledgeable about innovative gadgets; they only know basic approaches, for example, informing guests to switch off equipment. Moreover, obvious problems have not yet happened in the community and most owners of SMHs live simply:

It can be seen that Thailand has good biodiversity and plentiful nature. Thailand has never been challenged by a shortage of food as the economy is based on agriculture. A Thai aphorism *Nai Nham Mee Pla, Nai Nar Mee Khao* sums this up as 'there are always fishes in the river and the field is filled by rice'. The understanding for Thais that Thailand is never lacking in natural resources is common. Even though recent news and media coverage speaks of terrible global environmental change, the awareness of Thai SHMs in Nong Khai is very slight. They believe that the government should handle that responsibility.

(ii) Attitude towards guests' behaviour

An obvious Thai perspective towards guests is *Kreng Jai* behaviour. SMHs do not want to disturb or bother customers. Guests are deemed to be superior, but if clients and staffs are more intimate, *Kreng Jai* changes the situation. When the relationship becomes more familiar, the guest will become *Kreng Jai* to the staff. Moreover, SMHs do not feel that clients would help them to save energy; the clients only see businesses benefit, not saving natural resources. Therefore, SMHs do not pay much attention towards guest behaviour and let their customers do as they like. Moreover, the guests are considered to be served as special people, their interactions between guest and staff are relied heavily on the staff attitude. Attitude of Thai staff are partially influenced by social hierarchy. Labour staff working in SMHs are usually considered as low level social background and the guests are from higher social status. Therefore, a difference between social status have been made staff feeling as moderately. They should not demand guests to do this and that as staff and guests are different.

(iii) Relationships and organisational support

Relationships are more important than work experience or a serious working environment: managers/owners trust their staff to work properly and help save resources. The more intimate the relationship, the harder it is to complain straightforwardly. This is connected with seniority: a younger person must respect an older person in any situation. This is very significant in Thai society, and not following this convention is seen as impolite and uneducated. Therefore, it is difficult to speak straightforwardly to seniors or give advice, even if they are in a lower working position. However, managers can avoid this direct approach by using indirect conversation.

Because relationships are so important in a Thai working environment, regulation and rules cannot be conducted practically. The function of any position will never be set, as many owner/ managers think it is a very simple job and they often say that staff 'know' what they have to do. Owners are in the same situation, so they are quite confident in trusting their staff.

A lack of cooperation in between local government and the working structure between TAT and Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports (POT) has led to problems. A separation of administration power has brought misdirection; therefore, SMHs find it difficult to get accurate information. Most SMHs do not have much idea about sustainable tourism and how to implement environmental management. They do not even mention tourism (for example, how tourism is relevant to their businesses, or current trends in tourism). However, in some city SMHs, tourism is part of the reason for running the business, but without appropriate knowledge. They know roughly about tourism, but do not know trends or have any marketing plan. The local government, which is responsible for legal registration, is not responsible for overall tourism planning. There are two major organisations in charge: the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and the Nong Khai Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports (POT). There is no clear direction to help SMHs stay in touch with worldwide trends, unless SMHs could get support from organisations on their own.

SMH owner/managers have a variety of backgrounds: some are well-educated such as graduates, but some are not. The staff members are often poorly educated. In terms of environmental management, these people must be well trained to understand environmental problems, but this seems a long way off. Even SMH owner/managers have not yet understood current issues that businesses should deal with, and organisational culture does not supporting working function properly.

7.7 Conclusion

The findings indicate that the SMH characteristics in Nong Khai is peculiar to Thai society. The terms ‘hotel’, ‘resort’, ‘inn’ and so forth are not specifically identified with specific services. Hotel registration in Nong Khai covers 101 properties, of which 98 are SMHs. Hotel registration is defined by Nong Khai Municipality, and defines hotels that have 4-79 rooms small or medium-sized hotels business, and properties with more than 79 defined as large.

Nong Khai is divided into nine districts. Most staff working in SMHs have a low educational background. The number of staff in each business is fewer than ten people, particularly in rural areas. Staff can be working one or two positions (e.g. housekeeping and waiting). In other word, it is a multi-tasking position that one person can handle.

In terms of motivations for running a business, SMHs are motivated by family lifestyles, social position and business opportunities. Perceptions of environmental issue separate into two types: feeling the effects of environmental problem, and feeling that environmental problems are irrelevant. The relationship with a guest may prevent this being applied effectively or in a timely fashion.

Government and collective action are the answers to environmental problems, rather than individual actions. However, there are some limitations when implementing environmental practices: attitude towards guests and building interior; the relationship with guests; organisational support; and lack of knowledge.

Government action reflects how they deal with environmental problem and the SMH context. From the beginning, SMH registration is related to tax and legal planning; therefore, the local government would avoid punishment, adjusting the law and policy to meet the current situation and help local people. The environmental problems are not yet taken seriously. The government's perspectives also reflect organisational culture and Thai culture.

Chapter 8:

The Government Agents' Perspective

8.1 The Government Agents' Perspective

At this juncture, this study aims to address environmental management from the government agents' dimension, as SMHs alone gives only one side of the story. The view from government, which is directly responsible for the law and its implementation, shows how they work with the entrepreneur. Interviews were conducted in different government offices in Nong Khai, which have related environmental responsibilities concerning SMHs in the context of tourism. The study also identified the problem arising from the agent perspective that reflects the reality of SMHs in Nong Khai.

8.1.1 Implementing the law and reporting

Government is directly responsible for controlling the hospital business to comply the law and regulations. SMH businesses are inevitably involved with government officials, as they must follow the law and local acts to legally establish and maintain their businesses. The processes of approving registration documents depend on the provincial office, which is responsible for administrative approval. The documents are sent by the district offices, they are in charge of registration and other activities, such as organising and taking responsibility for monitoring and assessing business operations in terms of building and general environmental practice such as waste and water treatment.

SMH businesses must provide a full range of documentation including evidence of: (i) Manager's identification; (ii) Household registration; (iii) Proof of hospitality certificate; (iv)

Building planning permission; (v) Title deeds; and (vi) Business registration. Environmental criteria for SMHs are similar to those for housing accommodation regarding building registration approval, unless the hotel is considered large (more than 79 rooms), when the Environmental Indicator Assessment (EIA) must be taken into account. The lack of emphasis on environmental management when the hotel business is first established seems not to concern the government. Changing the law must be done at the national level. Therefore, government officials can only follow what the law states. As FF2 states:

“My job is to check the applications, it is identified by the acts, once the application and other evidence is ready. It will be passed through the district office to the provincial office, the governor assigns to the committees. That committee are assigned for field check_[s], e.g. building standard_[s] and facility. If the field _[is] checked and qualified it is then approved and signed by the governor. I can only host the committees when they come, I am normally on the committees because I'm the local representative and also by my position.”

Decentralizing to local government in each province (city) has placed responsibility on local government. Officials stated quite clearly about their duty, saying that the environmental part of their job, appears very limited. The interviews revealed that some officials struggled to think clearly about what they should do apart from their legal responsibility.

Table 8.1 shows the latest environmental regulations (concerning wastewater treatment) added for SMHs. These regulations have been in force since 2012 and state that accommodation businesses with more than 60 rooms need to have wastewater treatment. This treatment is described as any system that controls the standard wastewater level before allowing into public drainage systems. Section 80 in The Enhancement and Conservation of the National Environmental Quality Act B.E. 2535 (NEQZ 1992) directly concerns the environment and accommodation services and it is now promoting to public awareness, accommodation business in particular. However, the Act

only indicates that hotels with more than 60 rooms must install a proper wastewater treatment system. This means that only some hotels defined as medium-sized by the municipalities are taken into account; the majority of SMHs are not.

Table 8.1: Hotel number and environmental regulations (concerning wastewater treatment)

Hotel rooms	Act	Hotel responsibility
>= 60	The Enhancement and Conservation of the National Environmental Quality Act B.E. 2535 (NEQZ 1992)	Installing and reporting waste water treatment every month
>= 79	Building Control Act B.E. 2522 (1979)	To be assessed by Environmental Indicator Assessment (EIA)

The officials were asked about environmental problems in their areas. They consistently mentioned that there were no environmental impacts in their area yet. If there were, it was not related to hotel businesses. As FF4 and FF5 pointed out:

“It has never happened. As I’ve been working, there was no impact resulting from hotel businesses. They don’t have any problems, Mai Pen Rai, They all are neighbours. They can negotiate, in fact, crucial troubles have not occurred.” (FF4)

“Since I have been working in Nong Khai, it has never been reported. I mean from hotel business. I think the hotel business located in community area, they must be really concerned the environment as it is one of the amenity factor surrounding the hotels.” (FF5)

Officials have not reported environmental issues arising from the communities, or any problems between the SMH businesses and surrounding people. Under these circumstances, an environmental monitoring system seems unimportant and it can be understood as things on the surface appear to be going well. This is because the general view is that small and medium-sized businesses waste can be treated similarly to general households. No special environmental specification is required.

In terms of Thai characteristics, a harmonious living lifestyle of Thai people is a major factor that Thais avoid conflict with neighbours. Typically, reporting disputes to be

officially recorded is unusual for neighbours, unless, there is a gap in the relationship. In general relationship, the neighbours normally do not report, they would rather negotiate and compromising. It is very usual that they know each other well, particularly the people next door. The statement of FF3 and FF5 illustrates this:

“SMH businesses are definitely locals, in this district in particular. I don’t know the other areas are, but here [it] is [one] hundred per cent locals. They know everybody, participating [in] local activities together and knowing all. If they have anything they can tell each other, I mean if they have, but for environment or any harmful actions. It is not yet happened.” (FF3)

“Actually, as I checked, there was a hotel business situated near the canal and also next to the locals, the wastewater they remove from the hotel has been polluted. I mean pretty bad smell. However, we can do nothing, because the locals didn’t report to the government. They said, it was acceptable (laugh), yes the smell is still acceptable” (FF5)

Officials do not consider SMHs a cause of environmental problems. Hotels face another significant problem about land ownership. Even in the green zoning area, this led to failure in legal hotel business registration. However, the officials are challenged by influential people to allow illegal hotel firms to run businesses in the area, showing the indirect power that links to the SMH entrepreneurs. For example, GR4 and BF7 stated:

“Having said, that working in the government service system only could be the one thing that I must do, but, there are many other system linked. [Frustrated and thinking] One thing is about powerful people; the businesses have their own connection with influential people in the city. If the government seniors do really want to check or assessing the hotels in terms of legal registration, they can do [so] absolutely. Due to their connection with those SMH people, they just stay calm and do not ask us

to work that area Therefore, what we can do? We are just very tiny, we can just work on what we are demanded [relaxed].”

“It’s about what we actually know in our society, for example in Bangkok, the great condominium project, well, when we were before financial crisis. There was a blooming of real-estate business. The government has supported the entrepreneur by legislating the law, which indicates that the mega-project construction can be built before approved by local government. As the approving process by the government has taken quite a long. However, there are conditioned that qualified architect and engineer must confirm about the project including the environmental impact. If later found that the project was not aligned the law, then it must stop the project. Anyway, the firm has got their people in the government, company haven’t applied for the registration approved, they know whatever it will be approved, because they have people, they [like] already paid to that people (in government section) so they can surely continue their project. It is likely happened in our society, we all know, but Nong Khai has never had anything mega-project before, and the accommodation businesses are not such bigger than 79 or 80 rooms, they avoid being assessed by EIA.” (BF7)

The official referred to national culture as he said, “we actually know in our society”, that what people normally know is the relationship in this society is very powerful. It can ease the government system. However, the official state the intervention in the organisation is not affirmed in Nong Khai. It was the case that official pointed out the cultural perspective within Thai social construct. Moreover, in terms of complying the law, official (FF5) also mentioned, relationship is not always effected the government agents as it will impacted the government agents themselves. Therefore, power of relationship can be used when an agent is assured that they are ‘protected’.

Though the environmental problems are not giving cause for concern in accommodation business (small and medium-sized in particular), there is a just minor problem occurring in the city area as GR2 stated:

“In terms of environmental problem[s], as I’m responsible in the city area there is only one issue. It is the noise pollution, the community was complaining to the municipality office. The hotel was also discussing [this issue] with me, so I suggested the hotel to ask them what they want and give [it to] them. Finally, it was solved, I don’t know what the hotel did talk to them but it is no longer argument up to now”.

A very common issue for Thais is networks and influential people that intervene in the government system. Hence, businesses with good connections to senior staff can also negotiate for an extension or exemption for legal action. In turn, Thai society is very compromising: any social group would rather compromise than be aggressive. Similarly, government agencies will try to avoid conflict with citizens. This is agreed by GR4 and GR2, respectively:

“In the area, there are some illegal[ly] running SMH businesses, I know that it’s illegal. However, I have told them that they were not permitted to operating the businesses. I have informed them. They knew it, but they still have it. What I should do, they are just small family-running businesses, that don’t cause much harmful thing to our community. I can just let them go.”(GR4)

“The solution to the environmental issue[s] is about string, Thailand is about networks. The environmental criteria, e.g. hotel must locate with specific proximity to temples and school[s] to be able to have suitable surrounding[s], but now there is no limitation because the laws have been removed [...] as the one of the business network was become government staff, a politician. “So they were revising and change this issue. Moreover, this is Thailand, we are generous, don’t need to punish

people to the max, it's not a criminal. They are just stuck in the planning acts, why we have to catch them. Look at their intention; some of them are just hand-to-mouth. We can just help and propose for changing the law.”(GR2)

The Thai characteristic of avoiding face-to-face situation and conflict is relevant here, as is *Kreng Jai*. See the comment of GR3:

“What the senior agent says is what I do, I have to respect their opinion, and it's a common thing.”

Significantly, time and time again, it was clear that ‘politics’ is used as an excuse for ‘avoiding’ the rules. In a sense, this is part of the idea that ‘harmonious living’ is of major significance in Thailand. The government uses indirect methods to ‘help’, i.e. ignoring what is around them. Though the law legislates for living in harmony with other species, laws are created by humans and therefore can be broken by humans too. The law is not always applicable to every single activity. Therefore, this shows the importance of human domination over other species, particularly in collective society. This view is shared by GR2:

“To be honest, the main purpose of the government service is to monitor the law and political concerns, we are governing people so that we must lead them to the right thing, help them. However, some problems we have to turn blind eyes [too].”

As FF2 states, the general view is that local government should take care of people rather than enforcing the law and ‘punishing’ them. As officials have acknowledged, the government service system is complicated; for example, the tax and registration systems is complicated. As GR2 concluded:

“Nationally, there are about ten thousand hotel business firms, but only a small number of registered hotels. Because the criteria for being registered is very high, I think the government is revising the laws to be

*more compromising for the accommodation businesses, to enhance
[the] number of legal hotels, but not really about environment.”*

The local officials really understand the SMHs' situation. The government would like to increase tax revenue, so they are revising the policy and law to claim the illegal business at current time to be under the tax system. While government pushes the legislation, the local officials attempt to 'help' rather than punishing (i.e. stick rigidly to enforcement in a way that damages local business). Initially, the environment is important, and there is a city plan of zoning activity in certain designated 'green areas' for only forest and natural resources where any settlement or commercial activity is forbidden. Unfortunately, so far, the green area has been trespassed upon by members of the local community and many businesses such as hotels and the local market. If officials rigorously enforced the 'letter of the law', there would be a number of people damaged, included non-business buildings, e.g. residential accommodation, temples. The way officials 'help' are by revising the laws, especially the zoning laws. Though the original city-zoning plan is divided into a restricted area, a settlement area and an agricultural zone, this approach is now being revised to allow the illegal buildings in the green area to become legal by changing the green zone to a settlement area. This emphasises that laws are not enforced. Officials have developed a more compromising strategy in governing people in order to decrease conflict with communities.

However, the main reasons for this compromising strategy may be that the tax for legal SMHs is very high and complicated. Registered SMHs have to pay house and building tax at the hotel rate, signboard tax, local development tax and revenue tax which is linked to a specific accommodation rate. That is very high each year, while there are more than 70 per cent legal SMH properties running just under 30 rooms, this is massive in comparison to hotel room numbers and tax payment. This is further explained by GR2:

*“SMH businesses, which have between 4 and 79 rooms, can be
registered as commercial accommodation. Nowadays, we call [someone
with a] five-room hotel [an] 'entrepreneur' [laughter], what do I say; it is
[a] very small number of rooms with very much tax to pay. In comparison*

to illegal [SMHs] which do not pay. That's why we have to push [the] illegal towards registering properly. I don't mean that illegal businesses do not apply for registration; the main problem is that they are situated in the green zone, therefore, we must revise the laws to help them."

So far, it can be seen that it is very complicated problem, as it is linked not only the SMH businesses, but the wider community. Therefore, the local government is choosing to compromise and ignore the full process of controlling and assessing SMHs and their legal status. Nonetheless, a major problem is the strong relation between government staff and the business owners that they have developed by personal connection and Thai social culture. The rich are dominant in society, even in government organisations and can access and influence the authorities easily.

8.1.2 Encouraging and promoting environmental behaviour

Government is fully responsible for developing the environmentally friendly behaviour of people. There are two major offices that are responsible for environmental behaviours in the sense of promoting and encouraging such behaviours. In terms of promoting sustainable tourism, the lack of integrating environmental practice with tourism activity is very obvious. The provincial strategy plan has a policy towards sustainable tourism but do not state the activity clearly in the context of the environment. Tourism development and environment are ignored as FF6 who reflect the work with the provincial strategy plan, as indicated;

"They do not understand what they are doing, actually, tourism policy or whatever development have been placed in provincial strategy plan. But it's not really linked and useful to tourism development. Many times I told them that we are happy to help because we are expert. What I can say, the office is like other local office, Chao-charm-yen-charm (do for only breakfast and for dinner in each day). They do not know what actually happened globally, they only do for just finish. Their indicator is not how it success, but on what they have finished,

which is extreme different from my organization. I understand that they do not know; besides, every plan is under the provincial strategy and the governor. Not like my organization that is not under them. Since it operate under the governor, it become more complicated."

It can be seen that the office does not have freedom and they belong to the local government, which have very complex system. The way that FF6 pointed out to the local government organisational culture is that, 'Chao-charm-yen-charm (do for only breakfast and for dinner in each day)' (FF5). This is the organisational culture that literally shown that Thai are not rushed and are not kept up to date with global concerns. Moreover, environmental practice is not a concern of local offices, which consider other, more immediate problems more of a priority. To encourage people is not in their significant concern.

Though there is a campaign about green behaviour, officials stated that Thai people do not really care about it, they got brochure and put it on the wall (FF6). They do not really read and take action. Encouraging is not really effective, Thai people are so relaxed and not literally concerned as they have never thought that problem will be occurred.

Other officials also showed that they do not take action on environmental issues. They focus on sport activity and community participation in tourism development. They did not mention about integrating environmental behaviour towards tourism activity. Even though they are directly responsible. Evidence suggest that environment is left far behind as a global and not local concern. As GR2 stated;

Researcher: *"Is there any environmental action taken?"*

GR2: (quiet) *"emm...there is no environmental problem, I think ... (quiet and smiling), so we did nothing. It's okay."*

Researcher: *"Do you feel any change toward environmental problem?"*

GR2: *"It's hot and dry, but it's always like this."*

It can be seen that officials are in denial about environmental problems, so they do not promote environmental behaviour to community. Officials in different district are very local and they are not likely to be up to date with global concerns. Encouraging environmental action (or even thinking) is not really happening in countryside area unless it is about hotel registration that needed to comply the regulations. However, they tend to only comply with regulations related the law allowing SMHs to be built.

8.2 Problems Arising

There are some general problems arising within Nong Khai city that are similar to many other areas. The cultural dimension is one of the major problems influencing the organisational culture and also the attitude. These problems have been highlighted by the interviewing from the previous government agent whose organisation used to be major department controlling overall tourism activity in Thailand and some issues are from the interviewing of others government agents, as follow;

8.2.1 Lack of knowledge

A major trouble of not operating environmental practice is the lack of knowledge. Only educated people understand the environmental technology. See FF6;

“First of all, the locals must be educated by government about this environmental problem occurred at the moment and then we can educate them how to treat the resources and energy in the business. Normally they don't really know what's environmental problem?, because Thai people are always having plentiful natural resources. They are very chilling, they have never realized about this problems due to natural abundance. They have never seen poverty, they have never seen desert. I don't blame them because they don't know. I think business owners who do operate environmental practice or technology, they basically have high level of educational background and they also have intention and they are green-oriented.”

It is very common for official to suggest this problem as the basic issue. This also relates to the fact that Thai people have not experienced the deprivatory hardships other part of the world suffer that contributes to the easy and relaxed and this attitude typically portrayed as a Thai cultural value. In addition, environmental problems are seen as a global, rather than local consideration. The impact of severe environmental problem is not directly affected Thai people, they could only challenge the minor environmental trouble and there is always solution for it.

Besides, the lack of knowledge is seen as unimportant in terms of environmental problem. Officials mentioned that environmental issues with hotel owners are not their first priority. As FF5 stated;

“Public relation about environmental problem for hotel in particular is not really the first thing. Well, I must say public relation is the active activity that our office has never done with SMHs in particular. We can only promote that the new law is launched but for educating environmental problem is not really needed. If they do, it is from the head office (in Bangkok) that does for overall promotion. The active activity like this is not important than the current environmental issue to be sorted such as finding the location for community waste, this is more important because other industry is needed help than hotel business.”

It may be concluded that in Nong Khai has no environmental report. People can deal and compromise, as it can be seen from the case of community and the hotel wastewater that go to community canal.

To that extent, Thais remain unaware and cannot see the point of taking action and changing behaviour if the problem has not yet taken place, they would rather be staying calm. Once the crisis turns up, they would then change their behaviour promptly.

Lack of knowledge seems the most significant problem mentioned by Thai government officials. This also reflects Thais' cultural values: they have a relaxed attitude, as they have

never experienced those kinds of severe environmental problems. Due to their current environmental situation, many other environmental problems need to be resolved as the first priority rather than actively educating the public. Therefore, government authorities concern for environmental knowledge education comes the second priority. However, the problems arising are broad and related not only to hotel entrepreneurs but also to government agencies as they both have legal interactions. Another issue that emerged from this study was that even the interaction between government officials could be a problem.

8.2.2 Lack of collaboration within government unit

Previously, only one major department operated tourism development and marketing that was the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). This department is very strong and powerful in driving Thailand tourism to be well known in foreigners' perception. Until recently their responsibility was more or less limited to marketing and promoting tourism product. Tourism and sport department in the regions of Thailand is now responsible for tourism development. However, officials do not understand about tourism product and development in the way that TAT does. Tourism and sport provincial offices represent the head office. The officials are most often from sport related background. Official recognise this issue as a cause for their ineffectiveness and for the lack of collaboration between government offices. As FF6 stated;

“Local offices have never asked for our suggestion, it's ego. They think why do they have to ask our opinion, they could do it. Come on it's just tourist driving to destination, that's it. No! (stressed) it's not, it's about going to the area and speak to community, encouraging them whether they have potential to improve. I know this is because they (other official office) don't know, and the people they are from sport science, who are totally not understood about tourism product. This is the example of tourism activity, we are experienced but we are not asked, we have all promotion and package about how to deal, even the green

tourism. They (other official office in Nong Khai) sometime come to us when they couldn't really solve it almost at the end of the project. We always be the last person in charged."

And GR3

"What the senior agent says is what I do, I have to respect their opinion, and it's a common thing."

The lack of cooperation is usually discernible within the different Thai government offices, in other words, they work on their own and within the function given, Thai officials are rarely seen as proactive, they seem to ignore global issues, they work in a top-down manner contextualised by a national culture whereby Thais do not blame their seniors and people in higher authority positions. They follow the instructions of the higher positions (*Dern-Tarm-Poo-Yai-Mhar-Mai-Gut*). The concern over matters like the environment is not deemed a necessity, and they place responsibility on the government departments who are in charge directly in their job description like the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and the Regional Environment office.

Lack of collaboration between government units is widely found in Thai organisational culture. Thai cultural perspectives, such as the attitude towards seniority, strongly influence Thai authorities to be aware of each other's functions as separate. As each authority has its own powers, engaging in another government unit's project can be distracting, and they may even lack understanding of the project. Therefore, authorities show respect and this makes it difficult for them to comment while another official unit is in charge. Environmental responsibility is seen as a separate function, which should be embedded in a person's awareness. Hence, environmental problems are handed to a specific government unit to resolve, instead of within each unit.

With respect to separation of government responsibility and unintegrated functions on environmental issues, ensuring SMHs comply strictly with legal action must also content with the local availability of techniques and knowledge. Although there are some technological approaches available for energy saving, SMHs are eventually trapped by the

cost of investment. Additionally, the government calls on large enterprises as obvious impact can be seen at this scale. SMHs are only called on for a few legal-related actions such as a water treatment system. Moreover, no environmental problem has yet occurred for SMHs. An international agency's call of interest would seem difficult to apply locally. Only voluntary programmes are suggested in order to benefit from marketing potential. This has developed into the problem discussed next.

8.2.3 Voluntary programme and expensive technology

Environmental practices for SMHs are voluntary; officials cannot actually force the firms to comply. Therefore, environmentally, as they mentioned, SMHs are only under control when they apply for hotel construction. Therefore, another government unit can randomly check whether the wastewater is polluted over standard level or not, but coordination is lacking. Moreover, high-tech solutions for SMHs depend on their availability of budget. Additionally, officials stated that the high-tech appliances are a very expensive way to improve environmental performance, but more importantly, choosing, operating, and maintaining high-tech plant requires a level of education not generally present in owners of SMHs. Local can only operate within the comfort zone of their local knowledge. To be able to maintain environmental initiative, they must have budget and develop their understanding and consideration towards environment management. Government organisation can only promote and suggest to business that they require help. As FF6 and BF7 mentioned;

“If the owners do not come to us, we cannot help them. Our staff are here all the time, but owners should be really concerned toward environmental and must have background about this, as I have seen they mostly from good family, higher education like the lady in the other city, she graduated master in United States and her job was involved about environment. So that she turn to be SMH entrepreneur with green-oriented background.” (FF6)

“Well, small businesses are very small u know?, they have just 5 and 10 rooms, if they are installing the high technology, think it's not coped from what they spend, they think they can manage by themselves because it's really small and in their capability”

It can be seen that official understood that technology can help saving their environmental energy. They believe that technology is the strategy to secure their lives. They did not mentioned about the easy method without installing the technological stuff like key card control. However, they may have reservation that problems have not yet happened in the area, therefore, their method used at the moment is fit with the firms.

Given that as shown SMHs are generally operated on a limited budget, the less people lack knowledge, the less the likelihood of reliance on technological methods. Even though locals may have many other ways to save environmental resources, they may lack understanding that their local knowledge could enhance capabilities, such as of energy saving. When SMHs rely on technological approaches, the cost of unaffordable installation becomes a problem. These and other problems are interconnected.

Apart from the government official and SMH problems, the tourists also have a stake in environmental resources. In terms of environmental scenery and facilities used in the accommodation services, tourists are the people who can influence hotel firms, as they are the direct customers. Tourists' actions can deliver positive change regarding environmental management decisions taken by accommodation businesses. However, it is not clear that Nong Khai SMH clients are becoming more green-oriented, as discussed next.

8.2.4 Lack of tourist attention

Interestingly, tourism officials claimed that tourists are part of this influence upon being environmentally oriented hotel firms. Therefore, tourists should be exposed their environmental intention. However, in Nong Khai, officials mentioned that tourists also do not behave in an environmentally friendly manner, reinforcing the lack of action on the part of small businesses. As FF5 stated;

“Even I convince the local entrepreneur to keep the way they live, like in Loei (city near Nong Khai). The village have their lovely lifestyle; once they become entrepreneur they all have air conditioning. Because when tourists come to the place they ask for this and if business do not have, tourists wouldn't stay. Then tourists leave to other place instead, may be in town which is 50 km away. See? This make the locals have air-conditioning in the place. This tourist behaviour are divided into two types, there are countryside people and the city. The countryside people do not know; do not understand what should be treasured. The city is used to with their lifestyle. Well, we must understand, it might be their necessity, what they have been used to live, e.g. Bangkok (capital city of Thailand). They live in flat and that like a box with air conditioning all the time, if they want to ventilate with no air conditioning they can't. Because they lack of security and privacy. So we must understand this matter as their different social background.”

Thailand is situated in a tropical latitude and has high summer temperatures, including the rainy season. This means the country has at least eight months of hot weather. People have got used to high-energy air-conditioning lifestyle. The consumption of energy through air conditioning can be difficult for Thai tourists to give up. They, then, would prefer to cool down by using the air conditioning. The weather conditions differ from the West. The need to consume such electrical energy for air conditioning is necessary.

However, officials mentioned that tourist behaviours are a having big impact on SMH entrepreneurs. The SMHs themselves cannot successfully implement energy efficiency measures and reduce their environmental impact if tourists do not participate. Besides, the difference between Thai tourist and European tourist is emphasised (FF5). Government agents suggested that Europeans are very environmentally oriented but Thai tourists are not. While the European seek green businesses and are happy to pay, Thai tourists are not. This is shown very particular context about geographical location that lead to value and attitude towards environment differently.

8.2.5 Lack of appropriate environmental framework

Government agent claimed about the environmental law that it is still the gap to implementing. As the environmental conditions have no significance issue to assess if businesses have from 1 to 79 rooms. Actually, the environmental assessment should be evaluated in different areas and in various number of room ranges. Official stated that the national government should divide the number of room and the environmental initiative to different level. As agents mentioned,

“At the moment we have 5 rooms business man (laughing), it is difficult to conduct environmental check with just 5 rooms entrepreneur, I reckon government should divide accommodation business into sub-ranges, I mean 5 and 15 rooms, 16-30 rooms for example. Then we can create the suitable environmental management to control them properly as there is a huge difference, 5 and 70 rooms, you see ? it's very difference in terms of capital and land-use also facilities.”(BF7)

“Government is always concerned about tax, why they try to control business, actually they just want to get more income from tax, the land-use may be something we change the local plan to serve the government purpose.” (GR3)

The national government may lack of clear framework to integrate the law with environment and this has brought only the real aim. Environmental issue is not somewhat really in the government consideration, even the call for every nation. Interpretation of local government about tourism always turns to revenue for local people. The enforcement towards entrepreneur can only comply the law. They do not want to push business over their responsibility.

8.3 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the government agents' perspective towards environmental management in terms of legal action, supporting environmental action

with SMHs, and the attitude of government officials. These reflect the cultural dimension of how cultural value and attitude can be related to environmental action.

In terms of government legislation, the latest is only section 80 of the Enhancement and Conservation of the National Environmental Quality Act B.E. 2535 (NEQZ 1992) that states that hotels with more than 60 rooms must install a wastewater treatment system. This section applies only to a small number of medium-sized hotel businesses.

Interaction and Thai politeness take precedence over what works or does not work with nature. Therefore, the Thai concept of harmonious co-living influences environmental action. For example, caring for one's neighbour's feelings when something happens, one would avoid reporting an issue; one would rather compromise. This is why officials do not receive reports from SMHs' neighbours.

Another important factor is the connection and network of relationships, which lead to intervention by government. The officials mention network and relationship – that they are involved with power and the seniority notion. Thais always give respect to senior officials, by older age, more years of work, or higher position. Staff must respect and follow what their seniors allow them to do (*Dern-Tarm-Poo-Yai-Mhar-Mai-Gut*). Argument is not forbidden, but it is impolite. Particularly in conversation, conflict makes a frustrating situation for Thais as they are concerned for the interlocutor's comfort; and so they would avoid face-to-face situations. They would always *Kren Jai*.

Government agents manage their dealings with SMHs with the harmonious living concept. Politics are preferred in order to achieve this notion, and the Thai method is to avoid conflict. Rules can be ignored to achieve people's living harmony. Even revising the legislation to help people may be needed, such as a city-zoning plan, to enable illegal buildings in green zones to become legally registered properties. Furthermore, turning blind eyes to 'help' very small businesses avoid high tax is sometimes considered.

In order to encourage and promote environmental behaviour, a complex system is even more difficult to integrate. Also, the change in tourism duty management at local level into two separate departments has divided the responsibility of the previous integrated

tourism management by Ministry of Tourism and Sport between the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and the Nong Khai provincial Office of Tourism and Sport (MOTS). These two divisions should normally cooperate, but the separation between one autonomous and one governor-directed organisation has made it difficult to cooperate.

Moreover, issues related to environmental management and legal implementation are undertaken by the Regional Environment office (Nong Khai) and local municipality (Nong Khai Municipality). The former is responsible for waste treatment, environmental issues, reporting, evaluating and control, while the latter is responsible for building control and business legislation. Additionally, district offices are responsible for registration within a district boundary and are under the evaluation and control of the provincial office. Yet, so far SMHs have not created any environmental problems, although agents mentioned this may be their lack of knowledge. Thais are less aware of environmental impact as they have never experienced these as massive effects. The country's environment has so far spontaneously recovered itself; Thais are thus rather more relaxed than aware of what has happened globally and what is being called for worldwide. This is grounded within Thai cultural values to make things easy, and have a relaxed attitude. The problems are still considered by Thai agents as a domination by cultural values and attitudes.

Lack of association between government authorities, seniority attitude and politeness (*Kreng Jai*) make it even more complex to co-ordinate between official offices.

Environmental practices are voluntary for SMHs. The SMHs act according to their local knowledge and basic methods. They rely on general home-use saving energy equipment. As they lack knowledge, they easily believe in technology and do not know how to use high-tech gadgets as they do not know them and they seem far beyond their understanding. Furthermore, investing in such technology is also costly.

The next chapter presents discussion of the context of the SMHs relating to the exogenous notion-as-sustainable approach, the general context of SMHs in Nong Khai, SMHs' motivation for conducting environmental practices, the problems experienced by lifestyle entrepreneurs, and the Thai way of conducting environmental practices.

Chapter 9:

Discussion

9.1 Exogenous Approach to Sustainability in Thailand

In line with endogenous and exogenous approaches, Thailand, in the context of being classified as a developing country, has used tourism as an economic driving force since its 4th national economic and social plan. The country has been one of the cases that attempted to progress economically and socially through the normative modernization approach. Thailand has experienced environmental trouble since 1984 from a massive tourism activity with the support from the government to be one of the economic driving tool. Thailand was a traditional society with low level of division of labour, agriculture-based national economy, low technology production, dependent on local knowledge management. These is line with Ley's explanation (1996). Thailand was expected to develop like modern country in western side, which was said that Thailand was one of 5th TIGER of South East Asia countries. It was evident that time that Thailand was stated in the 4th national economic and social plan about producing the economic activity to be the first priority of national development goal. Again tourism was expected to exaggerating massive revenue. However, in more recent times, an alternative approach, sustainable development, has emerged in opposition to the traditional 'modernization' approach. In this sense, mass tourism was seen as a tool for 'modernization' as it required high investment and all kinds of services (Bryden, 1973; Muller, 1984; Ostreiech, 1997; Pavaskar, 1982 cited in Opperman and Chon, 1997: 39). This is especially evident in the 1985-1986 period when Thailand first acknowledged its

environmental problems. An alternative development approach is more considerate of existing cultural and environmental nuances. In other words, the alternative approach to development frames growth within its socio-cultural context rather than imposing a normative modernization perspective. However, in traditional (economics-led) approaches to development, exogenous knowledge is seen as the source for improving environmental problems. This approach relies heavily on the idea that technological innovation can solve environmental resource issues, and there is some validity to that. Nong Khai has a massive growth of tourism activity regarding SMHs number, that triple times risen was after the urgent call for environmental problem. Finding found that Nong Khai was never challenged any environmental issues and the rise of SMHs numbers was a result of tourist numbers flow by the friendship bridge opening in 1991. It is shown the 'particular' economy development of Nong Khai at local scale. Issue of environmental concern was not in line with the growth of economic activity (SMHs in Nong Khai). Sustainable tourism development is not evidently recognized by SMHs from fieldwork. Exogenous worldview is seen existed in local perception. Along with local law, there is no public announcement about new sustainable paradigm, the government working on passive action no exogenous approach being implemented locally. Moreover, evidence from the fieldwork suggests that for Nong Khai exogenous innovation is unlikely to succeed in being integrated practically with existing local approaches. This Nong Khai SMHs understanding is grounded by cultural practice (Ooi and Strandgaard Pedersen, 2010), the place they belong to is where they are taught to live in the society, this also how they see the world.

Findings show that the exogenous approach to environmental initiatives (e.g. product efficiency measures like electronic key card control) is a very costly option in the context of the generally small business size. Moreover, SMHs do not see importance of being environmentally friendly business in terms of tourist attention. Likewise, the registration fee of the Green Leaf programme in Thailand is expensive in comparison with the hotel size. Moreover, the Green Leaf process is complicated. Interviews during the fieldwork revealed that the SMHs struggle to understand and follow the overall application and

assessment process. SMHs do not feel connected with global affairs in general or the international tourism situation or even domestic situation. Their understanding is not about activity for tourism. Their relation to the tourism activity is disconnected. Their target market is seemingly non-specific. This shows not only a lack of marketing planning but reinforces the idea of these SMEs being somehow disconnected from global discussions and concerns. The idea of a general tourism trend that takes account of environmental issues is not yet on their horizon. Findings also revealed all these problems and this is consistent with previous studies (Mihalic *et al.*, 2011; Simpatico, Thomas and Font, 2012)

It is then difficult to seek or kick start innovation, as endogenous knowledge is limited, as are meaningful connections with the external environment including market trends. Finding discover that SMHs see no significant link with innovation, basic implementation is from their worldview knowledge. As the findings reveal a lack of awareness about exogenous approaches, SMHs act only to comply with local environmental legislation in order to complete their legal business registration. The law only emphasises the size of the hotel property that is up to 60 rooms and installation of sewage treatment system is not required. Therefore, the application of endogenous knowledge to resolve environmental problems in smaller properties depends on the individual SMH owner/ managers along with voluntary environmental initiatives promoted by government. SMHs are seemingly conducting environmental practice based on owner/ managers' personal motivation. That personal motivation is, then, dependent on SMH owner/managers' perception and knowledge about environmental issues (Chan *et al.*, 2014a and 2014b). Findings also reveal that an economic factor is not the major concern of operating a business (as discussed in section 6.4). Consequently, they might pay slight attention towards operational costs and they would prefer not to bother guests by calling on them to participate in energy-saving practices and actions.

It is also evident that owner/ managers' perception of environmental issues is vague (as discussed in section 3.2 General hotel motivation towards the environmental

performance); they see environmental problems differently based on their personal experience to their environmental surroundings. SMHs take very basic approaches and are based on the staff concerns as to whether they want to save the environmental resources. It can be seen that the gap between the in-country situation and exogenous knowledge is that endogenous knowledge is far behind global understanding. Putting exogenous knowledge in place at the local level requires much effort as legal action is poorly enforced. In this sense, the world agenda needs to be better integrated into the local situation through increased awareness about the potential for exogenous innovations to solve local problems. This challenges the finding of previous studies (Chan *et al.*, 2014a, 2014b) that environmental behaviour is taken when environmental awareness, knowledge and concern are increased. It is not clearly seen in this study as SMH owner/ managers perceive the change in temperature as irrelevant to the environmental impact of their operation. Intentions towards implementing environmental practice are interlinked with both operational and cultural factors, e.g. size and cost of operation contextualised by the local situation.

The small size of tourism accommodation businesses in Nong Khai is a constraint on environmental implementation. SMHs with fewer than 60 rooms are considered by the authorities to be similar to normal household buildings and activities. Therefore, they do not need any advanced tools nor are they motivated by law to take environmental action beyond that expected from a private household, this is consistent with previous studies (Antonia-Hallin & Marnburg, 2008; Marinez-Ros & Orfila-Sintes, 2009; Zeng *et al.*, 2011). Exogenous technology and Western-type motivation, e.g. profit, have much larger implications for large-scale companies than for SMHs, which lack awareness, technical know-how, and motivation, and are reluctant to 'disturb' their customers by asking them to participate in environmental actions that restrict service levels. Findings discovered that, according to the classical process of the Hjalager typology of Environmental Innovativeness, only simple methods are used for environmentally friendly behaviours in the businesses, such as low-energy light bulbs, or improved water sewage system to reduce pollution. However, these methods are absent in a few companies. This is also a

result of employing family members with the same mind-set as the owner and poorly educated staff who can only work on simple tasks. On the other hand, basic environmental behaviours are generally implemented in Nong Khai SMHs; observation revealed that basic energy-saving products such as light bulbs, fridges, and air conditioning are not being used. An environmental programme is obviously not being implemented in Nong Khai SMHs. This lack of action is consistent with previous findings (Ayuso, 2007; Kasim, 2009)

Nong Khai SMHs are locally managed much along the lines of a household rather than a professional business, cost reduction (an activity related to proper business practice) is not perceived as a priority; no full environmental programme was observed being conducted in a SME hotel firm. Fieldwork evidence suggests that SMHs are not motivated by cost reduction. This challenges the finding of Gu *et al.* (2009) who found cost saving is the main reason for hotels implementing environmental practices. As 50 per cent of SMHs in Nong Khai have fewer than 20 rooms, they believed that they are able to control usage. In turn, the use of local knowledge in daily practice can be seen at the local level. Therefore the concept of 'do not waste' is seen to be the guiding notion for SMH staff. They do not have specific actions in mind, or local knowledge on conducting an environmental programme. As findings reveal, locals rely on non-technological knowledge and simple management. The size of the establishment is also a major influence that frames the management approach. Exogenous approaches in hotel firms are based on cost of investment, high tech like solar cells, waste water systems, and environmental audits are all considered expensive and not affordable by small businesses. In conjunction with Nong Khai SMHs' context, the cost of these environmental management measures is seen as too high and owner/ managers cannot see the cost benefit to be attained.

Moreover, SMHs do not see any urgent need to apply voluntary environmental practices. They consider the problem to be irrelevant in regards to their business operation, this is because endogenous knowledge is limited and generally excludes the global picture.

SMHs are constrained in applying exogenous approaches. Endogenous and exogenous approaches represent different understandings and positions.

A general lack of knowledge separates Nong Khai far away from global realities; a bottom-up approach, as favoured by aid and development agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), cannot be seen clearly in Nong Khai since tourism is seen by officials only as an economic driving tool for development (or more accurately, 'modernization'). The government purpose is to generate tourist expenditure, while encouraging the locals to be more hospitable; the government approach tends to overlook critical environmental issues. The economic goal is significantly dominant as it is evident in policy for economic development. Environmental policy has taken 20 years to see implementation in legal action with regards to wastewater. This concurs with a study by Curtis (2004) who argued that the country needs to boost growth and employment then increase product value based around cost reduction in business practice.

9.2 General Nong Khai SMH Context

The findings of this study show that at the individual level, SMH owner/ managers do feel both the relevance and irrelevance of environmental problems taking place in Nong Khai. They see a contrasted dimension, which is understood by what they perceive directly in their social context. This is in line with Lorenzoni *et al.* (2007) who argue that individual study offers the best explanation of the awareness gap: community-level study may also offer a solution, as the social level assumes that people observe how others around them act and use information as a guideline for their own behaviours.

Findings indicated that SMHs' operational structure is really simple. The functions in the working place are divided into just two or three positions such as housekeeper or gardener. Moreover, one person may also be multi-functional, especially as there are rarely any clear job descriptions for staff. They do not have document and proper job description about their position in the working place. It is consistent with the study by Aragon-Correa *et al.* (2008) who found SMH characteristics are considered to be: 1) shorter

lines of communication and closer interaction within the SME: this is apparently shown in SMH businesses whether in rural or urban locations, as they have no clear organisational operation system, each position is directly under the supervision of managers. There is no supervisor in each department. The way they contact each other is the common communication made in a general situation and seemed to use relatively unofficial language; 2) the flexibility of management style; 3) the relationship of such strategies to the SMHs is that the relationship is dominant in the management style. Even the way they dress up, most of SMHs do not have uniform. They are under supervision by the owner directly. This study also found that family members run SMH firms, with neighbours also employed as staff members.

This is in line with Ateljevic (2007) who suggested that individual personalities and the ability to develop and foster a 'homelike' atmosphere when recruiting new staff is considered to be of prime importance. However, the family relationship is their dominant concern, even more than functional skills and abilities. Findings were similarly that owner/managers prefer to employ family members, relatives or neighbours, even though they may be less educated and have no skill in particular. As the job in SMHs is not a difficult job, similarly to the general housework and not necessary required high skilled performances. The most important thing is that SMH owner/managers' preference is about the work environment and making the staff feel like they are at home.

This may be because the functions in SMHs are not complicated; owner/managers would rather choose relative, family and neighbour staff than skilled people for the sake of being comfortable in the business. Another factor is that hiring skilled staff in Nong Khai and countryside areas is difficult. Even in city centres, educated staffs are hired only for top positions, e.g. manager, and very little evidence is found in Nong Khai's small and medium-sized accommodation businesses. Normally, owners are managing as manager or accounting by themselves.

Field observation also revealed that no environmental labels or certification were evident in helping SMHs achieve environmental practices. SMHs were asked whether they have

acknowledged any environmental programme. None of them can state clearly the programme or had even heard about it. Many of them have never heard about Green Leaf, sustainable tourism and 7Green policy. This concurs with many studies that found SMHs do not achieve much in environmental programmes (Thomas & Font, 2012; Mihalic *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, there is no certified programme conducted in Nong Khai SMHs.

All SHMs in Nong Khai are locally owned properties. They do not know any environmental programmes, even voluntary ones. This is consistent with Laver-Cortes *et al.* (2009) and Mihalic *et al.* (2011) who found that proactive environmental initiatives in hotel firms are likely to be found in international hotel chains rather than in a local single-owner operator entrepreneur's business.

9.3 Motivation

The finding indicated that almost every SMH is owned by a single family, and they are local. SMH characteristics are diverse but all seem to be motivated by non-economic factors: family lifestyle, social position and business opportunity. This finding is supported by existing studies (Benzing *et al.*, 2005; Chu *et al.*, 2007; Swierczeh & Ha, 2003).

This study is not intended to explore whether businesses are non-growth or growth firms. However, findings show that SMHs are motivated by unconventional non-economic factors, which seem to be non-growth-oriented. For example, SMHs do not have a management plan. They operate the business based on a trust and familiarity strategy as they employ staff mostly from their family, and some from near neighbours. This finding concurs with Holmes and Zimmer (1994) who found a growth-oriented business is active and market-focused, while the non-growth-oriented entrepreneur was considered as a 'lifestyle business'. Moreover, the SMH intention of having a lifestyle purpose also inhibits the businesses in terms of their capability; that is one reason why they do not have any long-term plan for growth. This conclusion is supported by the finding of Chan and Quah (2012), who argue that SMHs want to keep the business within the boundary of the family, as it is the most reliable and familiar in terms of business size. The SMHs do not have a

business plan, or any strategy to improve their product or service. They deliver basic services based on experience learnt through their daily experiences.

Four dimensions were found by grouping the different motivations from previous studies: family, social acceptance, independence and, availability of capital and business. However, findings in this study found three motive factors. They are: 1. Family; 2. Social acceptance, and 3. Availability of capital and business. The findings from this study do not indicate only one main motivation, running a business is driven by multi-dimensional motivation. The three main themes presented are shown as the major reasons for starting a business and it is seen that they are framed by cultural influences.

9.3.1 Family lifestyle motivation

For Thai national culture, family happiness is the most common thought with family members. While generalisations are prone to criticism, it might be said that, Thai people are concerned for their children's future as children are heavily influenced by what parents and family members want them to do and be (Arnett, 2007: 999). SMH start-ups do not necessarily have experience or any accommodation business background. Also, SMHs do not mention the difficulties of operating a SMH. Owner/ managers want to live close to their children and give them an assured future with stability. This concurs with studies by Getz and Carlsen (2000a, 2001b) who found that maximizing profitability became less significant than keeping family members in harmony and having 'sufficient' income. It is also consistent with Chen and Yans (2014) and Hashimoto (2000) who found collective national cultures consider family responsibility before environmental practices.

It can be seen that many SMHs secure the position for family members in the hope of securing a stable future for their children. This is consistent with Chu *et al.*'s (2007) findings based on Kenyan and Ghanaian SMEs. Along with Ahmad *et al.* (2014), they found family-driven factors strongly influenced participation in SMHs as findings also discovered that family is their concern for staying at home, which explains that parents who own the SMHs do not want to live far away from their children, remaining with family. In Thai culture

parents are responsible for their children's future, and until they are on a stable economic footing. Most Thai parents who have the ability to support will do so by assuring children of career support. The finding is supported by the study of Le Breton-Miller and Miller (2015) who found family owners or managers' positions are secured for the family member and to ensure their stability and future business.

9.3.3 Social position

The findings from this study indicated that owning a firm is related to social acceptance, which for Thai culture is really important. Thai culture regards the wealth of rich people gained from being the owner of a business as very desirable, and prosperity cannot be achieved by just being an employee. Because of the low skill required, in many cases not much more than household activities, the SMH business is a popular choice for business start-ups.

Moreover, in terms of social acceptance, to have a business and to be independent is interlinked with being the owner of a firm and navigating life independently as suggested in previous studies (Benzing *et al.*, 2005; Chu *et al.*, 2007). Additionally, it is said that having a hotel business also increases identity and the personal standing of the owner. This is interrelated as people who invest are encouraged by wanting to be recognised in society. They also want to be seen as an entrepreneur not as an employee.

9.3.4 Availability of land and operation

Findings show that a strategic location and emerging business opportunity underpins the ability of SMH owner/ managers to establish their business. SMHs are motivated and supported in their idea by family and friends who will encourage them in their initial interest. This type of motivation is an opportunity offered mostly by an SMH. This finding is consistent with Chan and Quah (2012). However, Thai SMHs do not actually have a tourism perspective of running a business as found in developed countries such as Canada, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Norway and New Zealand (Getz and Petersen, 2005; Shane *et al.*, 1991). Though findings uncovered the intention of running a business

based on the availability of land or financial resources, the overarching finding is still family happiness and responsibility towards family members. They may consider both the family and property (land), and the SMHs would create the hotel business more easily than a complex industrial factory, which are much more technical to start up. The SMHs do not even mention tourism opportunities, they just hope that tourists will come and be their client. It can be seen that SMHs do not have opinions on new tourism. They do not link their business with the tourism situation or opportunity.

Being lifestyle entrepreneurs it can be said that they are unconventionally motivated by family lifestyle, social position, and availability of land and operation. What Holmes and Zimmer (1994) called 'lifestyle business', these properties are operated based on personal interest and a different understanding of SMHs. Therefore, the business owners/managers understand that they would challenge the difficulty of business, as their motivations seem least related to business managerial knowledge, and environmental issues in particular. Environmental management calls for businesses at all levels to incorporate this issue into their operations. So far, the environmental aspect has become of interest solely after economic focused ones. Implementing an environmental initiative has just started afterward. In Thailand, SMHs are also asked for voluntary collaboration. At this juncture, findings discover cultural influences upon SMH owners/managers decision-making. The way they run a company can be explained by the next topic, which results from being lifestyle entrepreneurs and the 'Thai way'.

9.4 Managing environmental practices of Lifestyle Entrepreneur

Lifestyle entrepreneur businesses face certain consequences resulting from their non-economic motivation. The findings discovered that, generally speaking, the SMHs under study tended to have no recognisable strategic plan. They did not make plans to take the business into future growth because many of them operate within their own housing. It can be seen that they deliver simple services and they do not know much about business operations. Many of them have neither a background in business nor supporting

knowledge. They see strategic, growth-oriented approach as unimportant; they want to keep the business manageable from their perspective. This finding is compatible with Swierczeh and Ha (2003) who argued that knowledge and experience are not necessarily needed for start-up businesses.

9.4.1 Managing environmental practice in a business

In terms of managing a business, this study set out to understand the SMHs from an Eastern cultural aspect. This characterises the SMHs as follows.

In SMHs businesses, the findings revealed implementation of basic methods towards resource use in firms, they mentioned that SMHs do not necessary need to set up highly technological equipment. This is for several reasons: 1) the business is similar to how a household functions; 2) lack of technical and market knowledge; 3) lack of capital; and 4) business size is too small to achieve critical mass or take advantage in the market. These reasons shape the firm and its operations. However, one major aspect that tends to influence an entrepreneur is government policy and enforcement. SMHs in this study are defined by operating and servicing fewer than 79 rooms. Which meant they are not forced to be undertake an Environmental Indicator Assessment (EIA), nor are they forced to make high-tech installations. Though the latest Act, which states the accommodation sector above 60 rooms must install a water sewage treatment system, a majority of SMHs have under 60 rooms. As the findings reveal, SMHs operate based on single methods and local strategies (no plan), with only a few installing key card control (in urban areas). A majority runs based on personal practice and basic methods while technological equipment is unseen.

The resource management methods used are presented mainly from a cultural point of view, as follows.

9.4.2 Implementing environmental practice in a Thai SMH context

Thai national culture has developed in a very particular way, some aspects of which lead it to being classified as a collective society. In this context findings reveal that the

individual sees both the relevance and irrelevance of environmental problems and their impact on their lives. Findings show opposing opinions, but when they were asked about responsibility, they strongly agreed that responsibility lay with government and collective action. As Thai culture considers others' actions, how could they react with individual action? This is a very important question as Thai people are taught to be humble, not to be so outstanding and to live in harmony with other people. Consequently, they would observe what they think others would do, which is consistent with Lorenzoni *et al.* (2007) who found that social level is significant for a collective society when people tend to be mindful of others' thoughts and use it as guideline for their own actions and attitudes.

In order to achieve an environmental practice plan, the call for collective action for Thai SMHs is highlighted. This includes tourists and other stakeholders; just asking the SMH sector would hardly be successful. Many aspects have arisen, particularly *Kreng Jai* and the familiarity atmosphere that have brought uncertainty to environmental participation.

To that extent, the feeling on environmental change in the area remains limited. This may be linked to the idea that Thailand is somehow 'plentiful' (i.e. it is easy to grow things etc.), so this belief that Thailand is full of resources has made Thai SMHs give the problem a low priority, and Thai cultural thinking categorised the issue as *Mai Pen Rai* (does not matter); i.e. something to be dealt with after family matters have been sorted out. This point illustrates that *Kreng Jai* influences SMH owner/ managers into not expecting green behaviour from tourists. Culture 'allows' the phrase *Mai Pen Rai* to be said when making a compromise. *Mai Pen Rai* is closely bound up with *Tri Laksana* (the Buddhist three characteristics of existence) so the use of the phrase can be seen as 'an attempt to detach the hearer from her/his concern by referring to the Buddhist ideology' (Panpothong & Phakdeephassook, 2014: 99). In this way, it is indicated no problem can exist forever, a solution or resolution will be found; when a problem arises, Buddhist philosophy is to forgive, forget, or accept. This also makes Thais appear so calm and unrushed into any decision. They believe that problems can be solved eventually; let it happen and see what can be done afterwards.

In Thai society, people attempt to get to know each other as becoming familiar makes communication more effective. Where SMHs choose this approach, they are able to tell guests about green behaviour without making them feel uncomfortable or losing face. Losing face is an expression of loss of confidence in the face-to-face communication situation and sometimes among other interlocutors.

9.5 The Thai Way of Conducting Environmental Practices

At this juncture, the findings indicate a unique aspect of Thai culture, these characteristics can be understood as 'politeness'. Politeness in Thai culture is very complicated and very different from Western understanding. The politeness attitude is embedded in national culture. Partly because Thailand has never been colonized, feelings of freedom and resourcefulness are grounded in this particular Thai character. An easy-living lifestyle has arisen through abundance of natural resources, which in turn has made Thailand become less worried about global environmental problems. Even with global changes becoming gradually problematic, many Thais seem unconcerned or disconnected from what is happening. This can be better understood through a Thai aphorism, *Nai Nham Mee Pla, Nai Nar Mee Khao* which may be summed up as 'there are always fishes in the river and the field is filled by rice'. This attitude has become a common understanding, whereby for Thais, Thailand is never lacking in natural resources.

Given that Thais are not worried about their natural resources, they spend social effort in creating and maintaining social relationships. Typically, becoming friendlier with neighbours and showing generosity and concern for others' wellbeing. Leading a happy and peaceful life has led to strong relationships and is characteristic of a collective society. Thais live simply in rural areas but with more complexity in urbanized areas. Rural areas are still influenced by conservative Thai ways, different from urbanized areas, where society and culture, exposed as they are to the outside world, are obviously more complex.

9.5.1 Interpreting “Politeness” of the Thai understanding

Politeness is considered to be a fundamental aspect of SMH businesses as they interact with clients, especially in service businesses. However, politeness is performed differently from Western service business that obviously shows the interpretation of politeness in a distinctive way.

This study suggests that Thai values, as discussed in chapter 5, plays an important role in influencing the owner/ managers’ attitudes. There are some certain characteristics related to the managing and implementing of environmental issues in the firms that are outlined as follows.

- 1 *Hai Kiat* (Jirapornkul & Yolles, 2010) refers to face-to-face business contact, based on trust and confidentiality. This is important because Thai culture is very sensitive about modes of communication. The way they may express politeness is to make business contact formal, not the easy and comfortable way, but it is considered respectful for interlocutor. This is why SMH owner/ managers are really concerned about speaking face-to-face, if asking for participation from client, they would prefer to speak in front of the client, to show the body language of ‘respecting’.
- 2 *Kii Len* (Jirapornkul & Yolles, 2010) Thai people like to have fun, even in their working place and also do not want to work hard. This attitude has led SMH firms into not wanting to turn the working place into being too serious for the staff. That is why they want to make staff feel so ‘at home’. That is, feeling happy and enjoying working for them by being close and not focusing on detail. Eventually, this may lead to staff feeling too relaxed and not taking their responsibilities firmly enough.
3. *Tum aria tam jai kue Thai thae*, they prefer a simple life and like to proceed along the easiest and most convenient path. SMH firms seem to be an easy employment option for non-experienced local people. They mentioned this that working in a SMH is similar to housework. This can be seen from their staff position and management style, which is not complicated.

Evidence from the fieldwork shows clearly that SMHs in Nong Khai have no growth plans. The business size matches their capability and the notion that they want an easy life. They do not have to make the business bigger, which will make it more difficult to manage. This has led to a lack of other strategic plans, even for fuel/energy saving. Additionally, the way they think that anything should be easy to operate has made them less thoughtful towards energy efficiency and not really pay much attention towards new technological equipment. All management is based on the local style.

4. *Pen Nai Tua Eang*, Thai people like the freedom of being 'one's own person'. As a result, the SMH owners' motivation is driven by this particular value, as it is believed that being one's own person gives freedom. Moreover, Thais have a social hierarchy and being an owner can deliver the feeling of freedom, not under other's decisions; all desirable feelings of social superiority. However, this is not the main reason for SMHs in Nong Khai, there is also the desire to take responsibility for family that make SMHs want to create a business that will enable them to ease their daily routine and undertake their duty for the family.

Findings uncovered a particularly Thai way of influencing the working atmosphere in SMHs. The Thai nation is recognised as a collective society. This study revealed a number cultural characteristics leading to different barriers towards implementing environmental practices.

9.5.1 Kreng Jai

Kreng Jai, this value is one of the Thai identity forms that differentiate Thais from others. This particular *Kreng Jai* refers to Thais being taught to be humble and concerned for other's feelings by not showing disagreement or making others feel disturbed. In other words, Thais are taught to be careful in their responses to others. This *Kreng Jai* is used in many situations. It is the form of politeness, sometimes not seeming rational, but for the relationship and others' feeling towards one's words and actions. This relies on the heart metaphor, sometimes *Kreng Jai* is expressed as silence.

Kreng Jai is the heart metaphor. Thai SMHs are also operating businesses where relationships are of considerable importance. Rationality may not necessarily be the dominant approach in certain situations, particularly with clients. Thais are really sentimental about hotel service. Therefore, energy saving cannot take precedence over the importance of being fearful about disturbing or inconveniencing the guests.

As explained above, Thais are taught to be *Kreng Jai*, and the findings showed this particular characteristic appeared in several different situations, for example, in terms of cooperation in the environmental initiatives with the staff members. It is understood that Nong Khai SMHs employ relatives, family members and/or neighbours. There are some minor variations to this whereby SMHs do sometimes employ unknown/ unrelated persons but every one of the businesses runs on feelings of a 'homelike' atmosphere. Therefore, being in such a close relationship led to *Kreng Jai* feeling. Setting formalised working environments is very rarely seen. More importantly, due to the homelike working atmosphere, and the deference shown to seniors, a systematic approach towards managing this attitude is difficult to implement.

Trust is a major part in forming attitudes towards relationships with staff working in SMHs. As RF8 said,

"I have known my staff for such a long time, they are family, I think they have grown to know how to use the water and the electricity to minimum unit. I think we all conceive this issue, sometimes they fail, doesn't mean that they intended to do it; just a minimal mistake, we all can forget. This is forgivable."

Along with this feeling, the SMH operation is based on personal trust and relationships that led the *Kreng Jai* feeling becoming a common way of thought, which is unavoidable in this working environment. However, *Kreng Jai* feeling also means politeness and deference, Thai culture really considers politeness in this social construct.

Thus feeling *Kreng Jai* is the cultural tool that shows 'politeness' in national culture. *Kreng Jai* is also demonstrated in other findings such as in collaboration with guests. The findings

emphasise the way SMHs think of guests. The guest is understood to have an undeniable place of privilege. Guests have a 'right' to stay and spend their money and to be free when staying in commercial accommodation, just as if it was home. Guests, in Thai cultural understanding, are also very important as it is claimed that *Pra Pay Nee Thai Thae Tae Bo Run, Krai Mar Thueng Ruen Chan Tong Torn Rub Pra Pay Nee Thai Thae Tae Bo Run, Krai Mar Thueng Ruen Chan Tong Torn Rub* (It is Thai culture that any guest is always very welcome). Research findings discovered that for SMHs, clients are very special and attitudes towards them bound up in the feeling of *Kreng Jai*. SMHs cannot bring themselves to do anything that would disturb the guest. *Kreng Jai* in this situation can be explained that despite the need for green behaviour, guests must be served nicely and not disturbed. Having distance in communication between guest and host (SMH staff) has made *Kreng Jai* (of the host) and *Kreng Jai* is understood in this context as politeness by being calm and kind, which includes not telling guests to do something like conserve energy or be green-oriented. Nonetheless the 'relationship' is also explained by this connection between staff and guests. Findings highlighted the way that SMHs can encourage the guests to have environmentally oriented behaviour energy saving in hotels is when both are known to each other, i.e. when a trusting and respectful relationship has developed. The findings also revealed similar approaches for the staff as being viable. Staff are able to ask for participation in green behaviour by the guest once they know each other and they are familiar. They can then ask guests to help them. However, most SMHs mentioned that they are *Kreng Jai* about guests; telling guests what to do may lead to guests feeling inconvenienced by their stay thus impacting on guest satisfaction.

Kreng Jai can be expressed into other aspects regarding conducting environmental initiatives. Finding show that participation by clients cannot be asked, as SMHs believe that the guest is special and SMHs do not know whether clients are happy to be told or requested to do so or not. If guests were requested to do something they do not want to do they would feel embarrassed. Therefore SMH staffs avoid this situation by being *Kreng Jai* and thus prevent guests from losing face.

Culturally speaking, the way SMHs would prefer to deal with guiding the guest into certain behaviours is through politeness and by meeting guests in person. This way, both guests and SMHs staff avoid losing face: politeness dominates.

Kreng Jai can be expressed in many ways, identifying politeness is very important within the social construct (especially in rural areas). *Kreng Jai* is considered to be a factor in the framing conditions whereby people in society become more concerned about others before expressing themselves or making statements towards an interlocutor. Hence, the more Thai staff or Thai people keep quiet or compromise the situation, the better the politeness they are considered to have.

9.5.3 Buddhist influence

Buddhism in Thailand is in intimate collaboration with nature and humans. Thais are taught to stay in the middle way, as emphasised by the king's sufficiency economy concept of producing sufficient availability of natural resources. Many SMHs are grounded by the Buddhist way of seeing things and manage things in a capable way according to the availability of budget. They are taught to live in a middle way, though Nong Khai SMHs prefer to live in harmony with each other rather than live unhappily caused by too much effort and chasing profit. It can be seen that SMHs in Nong Khai do not want to expand their business. However, living simply and decreasing harmful impacts on the environment can be clearly seen as being influenced by Buddhist thoughts and teachings.

In thinking about, respecting, and placing others first, SMHs face difficulties in implementing some environmental initiatives because requesting guests to alter their behaviour (by, for example, switching off air conditioning) may lead to inconvenience and loss of face. Moreover, Buddhism as a way of sufficiency economics has been rooted with Thai people for a long time. That is in line with the simple concept of 'stay in the middle, not too much, not too little'. It is consistent with general SMHs that focus on their capacity and capability of human and resources. Though financial purpose is a partial business motivation, they consider their first loyalty to their family. The SMHs also consider other

SMH enterprises in same area as their partners not competitors. They recognise that if they do not attack others then others will not attack them. Therefore, the notion of Buddhism and the collective society are central to the SMHs' way of interacting with others, while bringing harmonious working circumstances. That said, they remain concerned about what others would think if they do or do not follow social norms.

Chapter 10:

Discussion of the Government Agents' Perspective

10.1 General Outlook on Environmental Issues in Nong Khai

Attempts at implementing environment practices in Nong Khai are framed by separated functions of four different government organisations that are involved from the submissions at the business planning phase through to the operation stage. Interviews revealed that government agents take a view that environmental problems caused by SMHs have not occurred in the city. Therefore, local government agents do not see any urgent need for action or resolution. With regard to other more urgent environmental problems, e.g. garbage-dumping area, officials suggested that this could be sorted by hotels exercising environmental practice as part of their routine operations.

10.2 Social Construct of the Working Environment

Environmental policies and programmes created in developing countries since the mid-1970s have largely been 'top-down' initiatives by governments themselves, often based on advice from foreign aid agencies. They also tend to be based much more on protecting livelihoods dependent on natural resources rather than on ideas of protecting wild lands (Boyle, 1998: 103). The official working environment in Thai society can be shown cultural influence toward working interaction between the official and the local and within the official themselves. It can be divided into 3 main aspects, 1. The supreme goal of working

in Thai society 2. The basic characteristic and 3. The action, the influences of cultural factors on environmental exercise of Thai government agents' viewpoints are explored below.

10.2.1 Supreme Goal of Thai society

The desire for harmonious living is the supreme notion that makes Thai national culture unique. It is governed by the Buddhist concept of living in harmony.

The supreme goal of living together in official working society is very important among Thai people whether in the private living space or public area e.g. government office, Thai is aimed the same notion that harmonious living in a national culture

Buddhism teaches one to 'stay in the middle' or to take the 'middle path'. The government attitude towards associating with SMHs can be seen as a Buddhist middle path-based practice. Along with the *Tri Laksana*, which teaches one to consider uncertainty and that all beings share three common characteristics: 1. Impermanence 2. Suffering, and 3. No self, selflessness. All compound things come within the law of impermanence. No one can avoid suffering from being born and dying and nothing belongs to oneself forever. To stay in the middle is a notion similar to *Mai Pen Rai*. Through roughly considering what is the best way for oneself and others, one stays on the desired middle path. Convincing and avoiding are the result of this Buddhist concept. Making society become peaceful should be led by calmness and a considerate mind. That is connected with *Kreng Jai*, by being conscious of what officials are going to do, more concerned with saving face and by awareness that one's actions may cause harm. This restriction always comes to the Buddhist mind. Thus, government officials do mention their final goal is to make the people live together peacefully. They would rather compromise than 'punish' those who do not follow the regulations.

Thais are keen to avoid conflict, not prone to violence, patient and tolerant towards injustices, modest, considerate and averse to criticizing others in their presence (Boyle, 1998: 102). All of these qualities aim at achieving harmony in social interaction. This notion

is characterised by Thais behaving politely, calmly and unseriously. In other words, politeness is the main characteristic of Thai culture and it is then manifested in politeness-based behaviour, a Thai social construct. The politeness notion is rooted in any social group, even in the workplace. As a fundamental principle of Buddhism, behaving politely by thinking of others' convenience (seniors especially) is taught as a basic element of culture. Thus, in some respects, expressing independent opinion could be seen as interfering in the working environment. Difficulties of politeness in the working atmosphere are discussed regarding the environmental implementations in local government as follows.

10.2.2 The basic characteristic

To a significant extent, authority is clearly shown that they are framed by the principles of Buddhism and the social-cultural aspect. The notion of 'help' and 'compromising' can be recognised as reducing conflict. Thais have long been living with no serious environmental problems. They are used to plenty of environmental resources, as it said: '*Nai Nham Mee Pla Nai Na Mee Khao*' (*there are countless fishes in the river and plenty of rice fields in the land*), therefore, they can find food and natural resources comfortably. Thai enjoy their lives so that they would not want to become serious in their everyday lives and this turns to their working atmosphere and working attitude by being nice with surrounding people.

The notion of 'avoiding' difficulty leading to or following a conflict is seen in the way that the local governmental is a reluctant user of its position as an external power over people and businesses. This culture of conflict avoidance with those who have a 'connection' or 'personal relationship' influences their decisions. In many situations the phrase *that normally happen in Thai society* is heard. However, the reality is that local government officials hold the power, but this power is dominated and shaped in its implementation by cultural values: the influence of status, hierarchy, and power dominates agendas, actions, and decisions. Lower status official feel obliged to comply with hierarchical obligations and the power of those in higher positions. Interventions

through external power/relationships in order to gain approval quickly (fast track process) is common practice. Connection is used in order to facilitate faster process.

To some extent, the kind of relationships can be understood in two parts. Firstly, relationships that lead to interfering with government systems: in this case, the patron is external and has special support from the client who is internal in the government. This client is also the higher authority who can then demand collaboration within the government system. Secondly, the patron–client relationship within the government is inherent because of the higher and lower social positions. Together with the seniority system, which is significantly prevailing in society it can be seen that lower position officials must comply with the demand from the higher position whether that demand is from an external request or not; the seniority system is also present in this government system.

10.2.3 Action

Collective Action

However, even with all the cultural obligations and power plays, there are not many events when power leads to an illegal action. This is because underpinning all the side negotiations, representations and obligations is the existence of official documentation that can affect the local government official afterward; an official would rather seek to ‘avoid’ the event or ‘turn blind eyes’ to similar actions. The power that led the local government to ‘turn blind eyes’ stems from the ‘relationship’ between local SMHs and local government agents, as the officials are basically local people. Both sides are then ‘helping’ each other. This is consistent with previous studies of Churugsa *et al.* (2010), Farmaki *et al.* (2014) and Hatipoglu *et al.* (2014) that relationships are always taken into account, local government is able to avoid action for helping local SMHs. The general expectation is that the existence of a relationship means that a relative or member of a particular group will look after them in exchange for unquestioned loyalty (Boyle, 1998). However, the use of relationships is at the SMH and local level and does not leave a

tangible audit trail through official documents and no evidence of the complex socio-cultural actions is left.

In this hotel business area, collective action showing the loyalty of the local people does not have a major impact on the environmental issue; this study discovered that it is not only an accommodation firm issue in the area, but also of other business activities that have taken into account land-use planning.

Avoiding action

Even though it was thought that environmental problems were not caused by SMHs, agents exemplified their 'politeness' or 'not disturbing' attitude by the way in which they would address problems: that is, by way of 'compromising' with the SMHs. They would help rather than 'punish' from their perspectives as enforcers and administrators. Though there are cases of illegal businesses trespassing in the green zone (in the zoning plan), local government would undertake 'avoiding' behaviour as they do understand the case that this happens not only with accommodation businesses, but also other establishments in the green area. So they would *Aow Hoo Pai Na, Aow Ta Pai Rai* (turn blind eyes) instead. In other words, showing loyalty to the group by not enforcing the law. This concurs with the Thai characteristic of 'harmonious living', that 'compromising' or 'avoiding' helps get rid of conflict between government and people. Moreover, it may sooth further difficulties.

Seniority

Power struggles in government organisations reflect Thai society, which is constructed through order and hierarchy. It is polite in Thai society that junior or younger people should comply with a senior's wishes. The seniority system is pre-eminent in Thai society at any social level. Therefore, any formal or informal relationship, social groups, and hierarchy are framed by this characteristic. Seniority is synonymous with receiving respect, if a younger or junior colleague behaves independently without considering the

seniority order or opinion, that person will be recognised as aggressive and impolite. Thai organisational culture is very strict on the seniority system. As a government official stated, an opinion from a superior position that conflicts with rules and regulations must be accepted or evaded; the more junior official can only stay still to avoid conflict with the superior's position. This notion also has its aphorism: *Dern tam poo yai mhar mai gut* ('walking following the senior step will not be bitten by a dog').

Being obligated to seniors, and the prevailing power and relationship conditions, are all understood as *Kreng Jai*. In the seniority context *Kreng Jai* means that the younger person should be always be concerned with the senior's 'face'. By avoiding 'losing face' of the superior position, by not having argument. Otherwise, the younger person would be claimed as 'disrespectful'. Therefore, Thais are always taught to be more concerned with others than oneself and it is totally related to politeness.

Mai Pen Rai

As the officials stated above, there is no environmental problem with regard to SMHs, most of them found that environmental matters do not matter (*MaiPenRai*). Even if they do not say *Mai Pen Rai* directly, it can be seen by the way they said, 'it's okay' or 'it's acceptable'. As Boyle (1998) suggested, governments in developing countries rely on traditional natural resource livelihood itself and do not seek ideas to solve environmental problems. Thai people are always forgiving, because they like living with peacefulness, this also influences individual perceptions of government authorities. Also, they do not see any necessity to actively work on promoting or encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour, unless a specific, tangible impact has emerged.

10.3 Limitation of Government Conducting Environmental Sustainability

The local government's role can be seen mainly as collaborating with SMHs to get the environmental programme into action. Apart from the social construct of government agents' attitudes, many obstacles emerge in Nong Khai city, which are likely to happen

similarly in other developing countries. Social influence itself together with the development context in the country have led to some common aspects happening in other countries (Boyle, 1998). These are lack of implementing advanced environmental policies, lack of knowledgeable staff, environmental issue is not given priority, and deficiencies in implementation.

With regard to environmental compliance, it is notable that SMHs in Nong Khai do not see themselves as connected with environmental problems. Extreme legislative enforcement is not yet seen in the city because officials do not see any necessity to actively promote and encourage SMHs in the matter of environmental sustainability. The local officials lack an environmentally friendly attitude within their working experiences. Officials did not state any clear views about the environmental programme they personally have with the SMHs, only the legislative aspect they conduct. Besides, legislation about environmental practices is only at a basic level at present. The SMHs and local government officials both commented on the basic waste treatment. But there is no energy-saving policy or legislation. While the simple method of gaining a licence or official permission for SMHs before establishing the accommodation properties helps the entrepreneur to gain easy approval for planning registration, there is little or nothing they need to do in regards to environmental planning or management. Even the new section of environmental legislation does not have a section about SMHs. This finding concurs with Mycoo (2006) who studied sustainable tourism in Barbados and reported problems with integrating sustainable tourism into policy. It was found that Barbados has a sustainable tourism policy but translating policy into action still has shortcomings. Advanced environmental strategies have not been applied to appropriate areas and regulations remain at a basic level.

SME owner/managers lack understanding of global environmental concerns. The passive response of the local government agents is seen in the provincial tourism offices, that they do not have sufficient knowledge about environmental practices to educate to the SMHs. They have no further environmental plan to promote. Moreover, any environmental responsibility campaign is framed by different objectives, which mix up the targeted

users, for example, tourism companies, tourists, and general household residents. Apart from the direct tourism offices, each government department needs to be looking after its own portfolio of responsibilities. This fragmented support results, as previous studies by Dredge *et al.* (2011) indicate, in staff being unconvinced about sustainable tourism when compared with overflowing garbage cans and poor road surface conditions. Officials clearly stated that their job is more important to look after other urgent problems like pollution by industry in their area.

The land-use problem is also shown in the way government manages to deal with SMHs. Though the local government has its zoning plan, it has been trespassed by many establishments included SMHs. The local officials cannot punish because they defer to the superior authority to change the zoning plan. They just let the illegal accommodation remain. The land-use problem is problematic with some SMHs: it seemed over controlling as the local residents and SMHs were previously located there before the planning zones were developed. The result is consistent with findings from Coccossis (2010) who highlighted difficulties where communities have occupied an area before the land-use planning was launched.

Promoting more environmentally friendly behaviour by SMHs requires more finance support, a finding similar to previous studies (Muangasame & Makercher, 2014; Pini, 2009; Tosun, 2001; Wongthong & Harvey, 2014). However, local agents stated that funding this additional programme is not their main priority, because they have other environmental problem areas to be sorted. This environmental problem is not caused by the SMH sector and it is considerably more significant than promoting environmental management for accommodation firms. Plus, they are only working under the legislation.

10.3.1 Organisational structure

Focusing on environmentally related duty on the part of local government, officials report that local officials do take charge of other matters of importance, e.g. environmental pollution control, environmental programme promotion. Another result of this study found is that only one major organisation has any global environmental understanding.

The organisation previously responsible for all tourism activities changed its organisational structure. The previous office is now only responsible for marketing and promotional aspects. The split of tourism-related functions into many departments has compounded the difficulties in organising a cohesive approach to environmental management. Such a cohesive approach has a better chance of success when a single organisation has responsibility for catching up with world tourism concerns. However, the new department has staff who are mainly expert in the sport field, and are unable to cope with tourism trends and fast-growing information. The previous organisation was the semi-government authority, which managed the activities promptly. The new government department which has taken over almost every tourism development activity at a local level is struggling between sport development and tourism development.

Originally, the split of tourism-related functions into the new Ministry of Tourism and Sport moved the sport officials from the sport department to the new ministry. This meant that the sport officials have to work in the tourism field from the beginning, while the tourism authority has been down-sized to just marketing and promotional activities. Consequently, the Ministry of Tourism and Sport is a purely government system, and the administration is slower than the previous semi-government system. Provincial offices are passively working under local government control. Therefore, in terms of tourism information, the new tourism provincial office cannot keep up with the global trend as the plan and information is passed through the local government system. The lack of understanding of the tourism field, along with the slow progress of information and knowledge development has created deficiencies. Development plans have been focused on the development of tourism activity at the surface level, e.g. community-based tourism development. The lack of variety and in-depth information is obvious as no diverse tourism activities are being developed, and the environmental issues in relation to SMHs are being ignored.

10.3.2 Lack of knowledgeable staff

This organisational change has impacted on the staff. The government officials working in local offices are not trained in the tourism area. The experienced staff who worked for the previous tourism authority which was a semi-governmental organisation were well-paid. Therefore, under the newly imposed government and salary-level system, it is not attractive for experienced tourism staff to join the government authority, and the local office in particular. The organisational structure is very influential in the changes in tourism development. As was said by an informant, *'put the right man to the right job'*.

The tourism official also talked about the misunderstanding of tourism development by the other government offices. This is consistent with several other studies (Carter *et al.*, 2015; Churugsa *et al.*, 2010; Connell *et al.*, 2000; Dredge *et al.*, 2011; Farmaki *et al.*, 2014), who found a lack of knowledgeable staff directly related to a lack of sustainable environmental practice. The work between government and SMHs in terms of environmental sustainability seems a low priority, consistent with a previous study by Esichaikul (1998) who showed that Thailand has a lack of government effort in developing human resources for hospitality and tourism.

Though the tourism authority is trying to announce sustainable programmes like the Seven Green policy, it seems that the programme is not yet successful. Only the official who is responsible for this programme is able to explain the details of the programme, but the campaign is not really acknowledged by other government offices and SMHs. This finding is similar to a previous study (Muangasame & McKercher, 2014) that reported a lack of direct involvement in such programmes, a lack of clarified terms, limited budget, and human resources barriers. The programme suffers by being categorised as a non-core activity, which will always struggle for funding.

Moreover, other government officials who are in different offices from the tourism authority do not even mention the environmental programme. Interestingly, the provincial tourism office, which is responsible for tourism development directly, was unable to tell the researcher about this programme. It can be said that environmental

practice is even less known among local officials (except the semi-governmental tourism authority).

It is a significant and complex problem that the local government has not been able to translate environmental policy into action properly, just the basic indications legislated by law. Moreover, the lack of collaboration and fragmentation of responsibilities significantly affected the local organisation's capacity to deliver environmental management activities. They are mostly concerned with their core task: the campaign launched by one organisation could not be integrated with other local government offices, as they remained unaware of this campaign. These results concur with Dredge *et al.* (2011), whose study on the approach used for sustainable behaviour with tourism stakeholders, indicated that a market-led regional framework was unable to change behaviour.

Apart from the reference to the tourist's attention to environmental problem, the government officials also claimed that the context between Thailand and other countries is different, Thailand is a hot country and (they claimed) cannot manage to control energysaving so easily. To help energy saving is a good idea but the Thai situation, they asserted, needed more energy for in-house appliances (especially energy intensive air conditioning). Communication from the tourism office to the SMHs was not always gained the tourist's attention. The notion that environmental sustainability is applicable at any level and location is unlikely to be true. Different geographical locations are affected by socio-cultural characteristics and environmental instruments do not necessarily transfer across cultures and economic situations, a view supported by Muangasame and McKercher (2014) and Wongthong and Harvey (2014) who concluded that specific tasks need to be used with specific groups and that best practice from others may not be universally applicable.

Chapter 11:

Conclusion

11.1 Contribution to Knowledge

This research set out to investigate the links between culture and environmental actions in small and medium-sized hotels in Thailand. This is important because Western thought dominates the literature on environmental management and aid / technical assistance agendas that help shape government policies and interventions at local and national levels. No account seems to have been taken of how people think and act in the local business world with regard to taking environmental actions.

This is especially the case, such as in rural Thailand, where SMH businesses are very small and operate more or less like households. Moreover, the business situation for SMHs is, as the present research finds, characterised by lack of technical know-how, lack of funds for further investment, lack of capacity for change in response to external threats such as changing markets and attitudes of tourists, and above all is dominated by traditional obligations and power relations. The present research is the first in the field to draw these conclusions based on empirical evidence.

This has led to a situation where such matters are seen as interrelated with businesses' motivation. SMHs are operating their business in response to their lifestyle. Their lifestyle

is culturally grounded, thus economic motivation is not the main motivation. It obviously influences SMHs' environmental implementation, which an exogenous approach cannot implement properly. Different geographical areas lead to difficulties of environmental implementation, where the cultural aspect is intense and has major impact on people's way of life.

Nong Khai shows clear evidence of the cultural relations that shape authorities' attitude and perspective towards legal action against SMHs. A complex socio-cultural system, e.g. seniority and hierarchical, power-based notions and patron-client relationship, has led to the Thai style of conducting legislative action. A top-down approach is in line with the notion of seniority. The patron-client relationship means 'helping' the SMHs in any way. Consequently, working on environmental issues in the government sector has brought about some crucial problems, as indicated below.

11.1.1 Relationship dominates SMHs' motivation

Empirical evidence from the fieldwork clearly found that lifestyle businesses are motivated by socio-cultural aspects rather than simple profit seeking. Within these socio-cultural aspects, this study found that family factors are the dominant motivation; family happiness is deeply desired. A family member must be provided with future career happiness. The findings related to the SMHs' motivation in this study shed light on those reported in previous studies: in essence, SMHs are driven by multi-dimensional cultural motivations. It appears clear that a collectivist society like Thai society emphasises characteristics of 'family caring' and 'family responsibility'. This finding of family lifestyle motivation outweighs other aspects, with social position, availability of capital and/or land, and interest in operational aspects being present, but supporting or underpinning family concerns. This study argues that family lifestyle is the most dominant factor, and has the most influence on lifestyle SMHs.

SMHs represent a particular type of business within the capability of the owner; as previously mentioned, it is (at a basic level) not much more than running a household. Thus

operating the business can result in looking after family members, giving them employment and securing their future without having to invest in complex education/training or even risking financial investment. The need to maintain family relationships is the major factor that leads people to starting an SMH without experience and knowledge. Owners do not have future operational plans, because they intend to keep within their capacity and capability, followed by being together as a family, all of which reflects a collectivist culture. The availability of land, some capital and a person's interest in staying at home and having business come together is an inevitable conclusion, especially when the general perception is that SMHs seem easy to manage. Moreover, the mutual relation with 'home' in this type of hospitality business is implicitly observed. SMH entrepreneurs operate on the basis of home being where they enjoy their lifestyle. This is in line with an intense level of responsibility towards family members. These conclusions confirm that for SMHs in Nong Khai a strong sense of family responsibility together with staying in the home are the key motivations for starting an SMH business.

It can be seen that a cultural construct, framed by family social interaction, together with strong feelings for the place they live (i.e. 'home'), is emphasised in this study. SMH entrepreneurs are concerned with their children's career; they would rather set up a business in their hometown; in other words, where they originally live, to assure that their children can be together with parents, or at least can be around the parents. This study sheds light on family happiness, which is very intense.

11.1.2 Environmental implementation is mainly influenced by cultural values

Previously, it was assumed that many developing countries are challenged by the difficulties of environmental practice implementation due to lack of knowledge. An inappropriate exogenous approach cannot be fully integrated. However, particularity of geographical location has shown that unique context needed to be explored.

This study found the contextual 'particularity' of the area is significantly grounded with cultural value; those cultural aspects have then revealed the cultural attitudes of Nong Khai SMHs play a major role in the operation of environmental practice. Apart from

general problems found in previous studies, this study highlights the ‘politeness’ attitude that addresses a very important influence on the Thai SMH entrepreneurs. Politeness comprises *Hai Kiat* and *Kreng Jai* concepts that lead SMH staff to perform well by taking all environmental responsibilities on their own. Westerners would also be polite when they face a guest; however, Western politeness can be very straightforward. On the contrary, Thai politeness would be really troubled if interacting in a straightforward manner. Thais are taught that being polite must be expressed with a compromising preference. SMH staff (even if talking about environmental matters such as switching off an air conditioner when the guest is not in the room) would tend to say *Mai Pen Rai* rather saying something straightforward, especially when the person they talk to is a client.

Additionally, saying *Mai Pen Rai* is used for different situations to avoid verbal or social conflict, thanking, apologizing, offering to help, and expressing regret or complaining. SMH staff normally express *Mai Pen Rai* by not complaining to guests, as they have the right to stay comfortably. This finding strongly represents Thai verbal culture and attitude.

However, the way that SMHs could ask for cooperation is the familiarity strategy. This method reflects Thai cultural value in terms of politeness. Even for the general acknowledgement of environmental concerns, cultural value still has influence, as Thai society is considerate and aware of verbal conflict, and also aware of the interlocutor’s feeling. To reduce these worries, they would ensure that they and the clients are familiar with each other, and consequently they can really call for environmentally friendly action. In turn, once customers are used to staff, they would be increasingly aware of the consumption of energy resources. Hence, this finding has enhanced the green implementation of Thai culture that politeness as a Thai value is a major barrier for SMHs asking for participation from guests.

Similarly, findings suggested that familiarity is used within staff operations; the ‘homelike’ atmosphere is built to make staff feel at home. The ‘home’ is therefore the basic social interaction that shows the trust and reliability of family members. SMHs alike, owners/managers increase staff familiarity by making this feeling of being at home,

working altogether on a trusting basis. Exogenous practice is difficult to achieve as it places in the hands of staff knowledge and perception of environmental issues. Consequently, operation within the SMHs seemingly depends on staff. Environmental problems are recognised as the last issue SMH owners/managers are concerned with. The findings show that the relationship is dominant over the virtual environmental exercised among SMH staff.

11.1.3 Cultural value in Nong Khai

The findings suggest that Thai government operations and implementation of laws are influenced by cultural values. The operational system shows the obvious cultural attitude towards environmental legislation. In order to enforce the legal action of environmental policy, the government does not play an active role with SMHs. They could only take action on the legislative statement. The administrative system shows the top-down approach along with the organisational culture that leads Thai government officials to work under the seniority and hierarchical, power-based notions. The findings show that with the seniority hierarchy, those in higher positions inherently have power beyond their working position. Those in a lower working position must comply as it is in accordance with the top-down approach that characterises Thai society. Powerful people in top positions govern; however, in this case, there is no impact on environmental compliance, but the findings reveal this top-down approach is in line with the seniority/ hierarchical concept. This emphasises that Thai officials are followers and do not engender conflict within the working environment. Regarding environmental legislation, the small scale of SMHs means that they sit 'below' the legal requirements; there are few environmental laws with which they have to comply. This represents an important finding. Officials do not necessarily manage this particular issue with SMHs; they are not perceived as part of any environmental problem, especially when compared to significant environmental problems connected to other sectors.

Relationships, particularly patron–client relationships, a significant factor in Thai culture, are not helped by starting legal action even when linked to official evidence. However, the strategy used for ‘helping’ SMEs is, then, ‘avoiding’ the legal action instead.

The research found other cultural aspects that characterise Thai government officials’ attitude towards environmental action. The study found that due to the very few laws stated for SMHs, the environment is not seen as being damaged by SMHs. This has led to a passive process from the government side. Along with seniority/ hierarchy and relationships, the local government official must comply with their position in the socio-cultural framework. The top-down approach used in Thailand highlights Thai culture of seniority and order.

The top-down approach by the Thai government is a proper fit for legislation and enforcement as SMHs place responsibility on the government. The exogenous approach can be considered the external fundamental, which is shaped by the Western development concept and through international agencies (see chapter 2). The exogenous approach would not be used for every dimension. SMHs only comply with the legal requirements. They do not show any proactive environmental behaviour. The government should then increase the environmental laws for SMHs.

The problems highlighted in this study are: 1) lack of staff who can work actively and jointly with SMHs, due to the lack of expertise in various departments; 2) lack of integrated plans for local action (a district plan); 3) lack of a strategic plan on pro-environmental behaviour; and 4) lack of collaboration between government officials for tourism and environmentally related issues. While the organisational culture of Thai government officials influences the integration of exogenous plans, using a top-down approach as with legislative action can help SMHs’ actions and government departments. Thais are used to being told what to do and respecting higher positions, which includes the higher, reliable people, that is, government officials.

11.2 Limitation of the Study

11.2.1 Limitation associated with the participants in the study

The limitation associated with the participants of this study involves their backgrounds, which may not be sufficiently diverse. Of the group of SMH entrepreneurs, the majority of SMH companies are located in the city centre. The city centre SMHs are characterised differently, while the rural SMHs have similar characteristics, though in different districts. Diversity in SMH characteristics is not considered in this study, as the study focuses on the hotel size, but hotel characteristics may affect SMH motivation. Moreover, the study was undertaken in every district, not concentrating only on the city centre and environmental implementation, and the majority of the SMHs are in this area, as it was anticipated to represent the entire province. This may not sufficiently represent a better understanding of the SMHs' motivation and environmental practice implementation in different hotel classifications.

Similarly, limitation regarding government staff is found in this study. There were a few government units involved in this study selected for their responsibilities related to SMHs and environmental issues. The officials who were contacted are from the top and specific positions, and may not represent the whole organisation they are in. Additionally, the government staff responsibility towards SMHs and environment is different in duty. This could reflect their position and problems may have arisen. It may not represent the diversity of all the government officials in Nong Khai on cultural attitudes towards SMHs.

The study aims to indicate the environmental government function associated with SMHs, how it is expressed in cultural aspects in the reality of Nong Khai. The personal attitude of governmental staff may not be sufficiently diverse. This is due to the study being based on real duties involved in the study, and those positions are powerful enough to enable change in local implementation.

11.2.2 Limitation associated with data collection method

The researcher found a challenge to her study in that her presence may influence the key informants' perception towards the researcher and how they acted in the interview. However, it would be impossible to pretend a role as a local SMH or other position, because the interview data collection method and inspection needed a government official to first introduce the key informant. The official introduction is significant for a reliable interview, because officials suggested the researcher to be accompanied by them, otherwise the study could not be happen. The SMHs are aware of giving information, therefore, the researcher cannot conceal her status.

Similarly, there is a limitation related to the government officials. There was only one way to conduct the interview with these officials as the authorities are aware of being interviewed, which could affect their career. As the researcher is not a person involved with the authorities, an official letter from the researcher's university was the only way to be officially introduced to them, to assure their information was being taken only for research purposes. Moreover, only one interview for each official was possible because of their busy schedule.

Besides, there are also authorities that are in charge of environmental issues, who work under various functions in the district area. They are very reserved and cannot give all information that the researcher requested. They had almost no idea of how to answer the questions, even though these agents were confirmed by the authorities as the respondents responsible for the area of interest. However, the researcher then sought for other, similar positions in different districts, instead.

11.2.3 Limitation related to feedback from interviewee checking

Interviewee checking was used to ensure confirmability. A challenge for this study concerned the rate of feedback gained from the group of SMHs and the governmental staff. This was because the researcher finished summarising the main themes (as part of the analysis process) after she had left Thailand. Therefore, the researcher had to contact

them via email and post. Moreover, the respondents are dispersed: some can be contacted via email but the majority must be contacting via post. Both received very slow responses, around two months. The researcher had to contact them personally by phone to ask for the feedback checks. Consequently, the result of the two emails was that 2 respondents verified the main themes. By post, 12 of 26 respondents verified the themes of the findings. Additionally, confirmation of over a third of respondents was attempted via international call, which resulted in 9 out of 14. In total, 23 out of 40 respondents confirmed the main themes.

11.2.4 Limitation of ‘particularity’

The particularism or particularity of this study emphasised that findings from the study of human culture are complex. It is not about clarifying or categorising. Particularity is shown in specific characteristics based on the qualitative study. It shares ‘being different’. As Stake (1995: 8) commented

“Interpretive study seeking out emic meanings held by the people within the case is strong, researcher expected certain events evolves in the action of writing itself. The researcher will select the story for an understanding. Moreover, research come to know what has happened partly in terms of what others reveal as their expert.”

This study, consequently, provides the Nong Khai SMH context in relation to the interest of environmental practice and interaction with the government point of view. This study was conducted with a limited number of informants, which may not be sufficient for understanding the overall, systematic operation of the SMHs.

An additional limitation is that SMHs firms in Nong Khai are located around the city; each district has its specific geographical characteristics, which this study does not explain by different characteristics except size. The particularity of Nong Khai is that the location characterises Nong Khai to have a bright economic future and tourism opportunities while others industries in the city may be the opposite. Nong Khai is growing with increased

support from the hotel sector. However, its cultural influences may share some national cultural attitudes. This is, however, reflected in certain angles of the study. The social construct should be understood with particular environmental issues. Therefore, the study findings would exclude: 1) all aspects of Nong Khai SMHs' characteristics; 2) generalizability, as the latter is in opposition to particularism, although it is considered parallel.

That said, the particular findings based on Nong Khai are sufficiently robust to allow certain recommendations to be made in the following sections.

11.3 Suggestions for the Government

Based on the researcher's observation and the researcher's own experience gained from this study, together with the results of this study, this study provides a number of recommendations for the national government, local government and the tourism-related organisations to improve benefits for the government and the SMHs. These recommendations are expected to be applicable to any local government and the state government, which share the same government structure and SMH context.

The recommendations are as follows.

National government

The law on environmental issues should be applied and revised, as the new regulations released are only about fairly large hotels (from 60 rooms). This is because the majority of hotel businesses are small and medium-sized hotels, and collective actions are not achieved by voluntary practice, as the SMHs run based on cost and operational style. Therefore, government should take action on increasing environmental behaviours.

State government

Though the study took place at the local level, the local governments are working in association with state government; therefore, the working situation results from the government system. It seems the state government is responsible for training and informing the local government staff. Talking more to them would support enhancing the local government to take action on increasing environment awareness. Constant internal support towards the environment to press for the collective action of staff is the primary activity, as government officials do not consider environmental issues, as they do not have a sense of public belonging. Having a campaign or training programme will enable government staff to integrate themselves with daily practice.

One of the major issues is that collaboration between government organisations needs to be addressed. As the SMHs relate to different functions, each unit overlaps for some issues, e.g. planning. Experts in different government organisations should be able to transfer knowledge case by case. As tourism-related government expertise is dispersed, and professionals in the tourism field are now being relieved of their role in tourism development, integration among government units should be an easy enhancement. Though cultural aspect influences government officials' attitude, association is more crucial. Changing organisational culture seems difficult; however, the government should concentrate on the environmental benefit of the entire country.

Another significant aspect is serious action towards SMHs; though there is a lack of legislative action on SMHs at the present, local government should focus on educating for better environmental practice: encouraging local SMHs to be aware of their resource usage; and introducing them to suitable environmental practice. This includes local government, which interacts with SMHs, by not putting responsibility only on tourism-related organisations. This is due to environmental issues not only involving tourism impacts, but all its aspects. A possible method to use with SMHs is to support the environmentally friendly SMH by tax reduction or billing, which can help green behaviours. As SMHs run on an economic basis, incentives could increase behaviour.

The awarding system allows environmentally friendly SMHs to be rewarded once they achieve a standard, even if they have no environmental innovation technology; the SMHs

can deliver the energy-saving programme by many methods based on their knowledge. Green behaviours evidently show in the reduction of energy bills, for example. The government could help by awarding SMHs, by communicating via tourism-related government agencies and public communications.

Local government creates local environmental practice that fits the locale specifically, integrating global concerns/behaviours and building local attitudes to seek for proper methods for environmental concerns/behaviours. This point is very important to help SMHs understand world concerns, along with the local level.

11.4 Suggestion for Developing Countries

Global agency

Developing countries like Thailand, which anticipate economic growth, tend to show less consideration towards action for environmental behaviours than many mature economies. At present, a global agency can ask for commitment at the international level. However, many developing countries lack experts and need constant support from a global agency. The global agency needs to work through the local government and people. Long-term participation must be addressed as the Thai people have become used to plentiful natural resources. They do not pay much attention to global concerns. Experts working in the area for enhancing local perceptions and growing support would finally achieve long-term planning.

The global agency is needed to understand the context of the destination. Then they can work understanding the specific need. However, it is suggested to global experts that location makes resource use levels different; this must be considered. Introducing high-tech instruments via Western countries may be difficult; they must work based on the local context.

It is noted that the top-down approach of sustainable tourism development cannot fit everywhere; where local environmental awareness is low, they would ignore this unintentionally. The top-down approach is supposed to work properly. The top-down

approach is led by government; they have to be strict and conduct it seriously. If the government allows local people and entrepreneurs to conduct it voluntarily, they would not see any significance. Consequently, enforcing and promoting should be addressed altogether.

11.5 Suggestion for SMHs

Lack of knowledge and up-to-date information on the part of SMHs are seen obviously in the Nong Khai geographical location. The hotel firms should make an effort to be far more aware of what is going on and become updated at the national and international levels. Though the SMHs are lifestyle businesses, they still operate based on cost and benefit at some points. They should find the best way for environmental action in the hotel. More importantly, SMHs should be concerned about the environmental problem.

Encouraging guests by the polite way can be informative for the guest, using energy-saving tools and starting the business itself to communicate with clients.

11.6 Suggestions for Future Study

Cultural influence

This study found that Thai SMHs are culturally influenced in their business operations. Though many previous studies have been conducted on the cultural dimension, they were mostly focused on general cultural behaviours. Studies on particular businesses or specific company types are rarely found in the Thai context. This study indicated that service businesses like hotel firms are not just highly reliant on customer satisfaction, but their interactions with staff are culturally bounded; even simply asking for cooperation from clients is seen as potentially distracting from their pleasant stay, leading to staff to say *Mai Pen Rai* rather than please turn off your air conditioner. Hence, implementing environmental practices in SMHs is difficult to achieve. Though there are English versions of journals, articles and conference reports about Thai cultural behaviour and attitude, they did not report an understanding of these cultural aspects. Therefore, in dealing with different social contexts, an understanding is needed of the cultural context and the

exogenous approach, and the extent to which an exogenous approach can be applied effectively. The need for studies on cultural influences has become more important, as it is currently more concerned about operational matters at the local scale.

Stakeholder cultural attitude

This study reveals the entrepreneurs and the government agents' perspectives, but the attitudes of local residents and tourists have not been researched. These interactions influence each other. Looking at different perspectives can help understand the problem and help develop an effective approach. This study's outcome has uncovered the entrepreneurs' point of view: that they do not want to disturb their guests and they were unsure about asking for cooperation. Moreover, the role of government towards companies is restricted to legislation. An active programme must be provided in cooperation with the local people to have sufficient connection with legal action, and also, with the tourists who would enable the SMHs to conduct the environmental initiative. The tourists' perspectives can have positive impacts on the legal and voluntary actions, but that is a matter for further research.

11.7 Postscript: Reflection on my Research Background

11.7.1 The beginning of my involvement in accommodation business

My family has run a family business since 1998. At that time my parents started operating with a few staff. Initially, I did know that my parents did not have personal experience about this business, but they wanted to do something for us. So I did not wonder why they ran this business for us. Our culture asks for parents' to be responsible for their children's happiness. I am used to this kind of notion as I have always been treated well and I have been given almost everything a child could ask for. I knew that they are responsible for my security and make sure that I am safe in the future. However, my question was why it is an accommodation business, the question stuck in my mind, but at that time it did not concern me so much. From my dad I heard, he just needed to do something for his retired

life; as he was a real estate businessman, he was unsure about the future so he wanted to secure a revenue for his family. He had bought some acres of land in the city, he wanted to do something on the land and that has become a small accommodation business. My father designates the building layout and interior. All designs were from my father's experience and passion about building and design.

By not having experience and profession in an accommodation firm before, the company was operated under common sense as our family has experienced from being guests in other accommodation services, e.g. what we should provide for guests, how much we should charge per night. However, many services and facilities provided are based on our financial capability. My parents do not even have a marketing strategy or any hotel management theory. Luckily, at the time we started operating the firm, we had a high occupancy rate. Meanwhile, we have learnt by experience and also myself to get to know that, generally, a small resort firm like this, usually has a special service on request. That is the three-hour service. This service is provided for special purposes and this special three-hour service is offered in almost every SMH in Thailand. This service, however, is not arranged by some kinds of SMH; it is discernible what kinds of SMH have it. For example, in those firm buildings that do not come with full service like breakfast, it can be seen that there is no café or restaurant area. The parking area is relatively isolated and hidden. Though there are many storeys, it is the ground floor that is taken for this special service. The external appearance is quite local, as it is constructed based on a local idea. The room interior is not so decorative. Moreover, this has become our major income for running the local SMH business. These are founded mainly in countryside.

11.7.2 Enhancing tourism experience

I finished a Bachelor's degree in geography from Kasetsart University in Bangkok (Thailand) in 2002. I was planning to carry on with a Master's degree in tourism as I had been introduced to the bright future of tourism field in Thailand. So, in 2003, I started doing a Master's study in Tourism Industry Management at Chiang Mai University. During my course, I was totally immersed into this field and realized how tourism is important to

Thailand's economic development. My perspective about tourism has been so much influenced by this.

Apart from my personal background, our family business was a pioneer of the small and medium-sized business around the town centre. It was busy from the start of operation for around eight to nine years. Then the occupancy rate started to gradually decrease due to new emerging SMHs in the city. This accompanied the attempts of the Nong Khai tourism agency to steadily promote the tourist destination. The number of new emerging SMHs increased sharply from 27 in 2009 to 92 in 2010 (Tourism Authority of Thailand; TAT), which surprised me. I did not know exactly the quantity but I noticed from the surroundings and that many ranges of SMH services have emerged.

It became my personal interest: "Are these properties emerging in a response to tourism development? Why have they so few facilities and seem of very unpleasant design. Furthermore, why they are interested in hotel firms?" These questions come up; this may be my life, which has been related to this sort of tourism business for more than ten years.

I began questioning about my hometown tourism (Nong Khai), especially the hotel business, as I personally noticed that my family hotel firm is operated based on personal motivation and has no management knowledge and skill. Moreover, I was told that domestic tourists were also our clients, but the majority are for the special three-hour service and regular clients like salespersons. It seems that other operations similar to my business could be the in same category. Even in the 'for tourism purpose hotel', the prices were very competitive among local-style SMHs, so why is this sort of local-style SMH still emerging. My question was: do they know anything about tourism service or trends? Are these really from their passions or tourism opportunities?

I have had an opportunity to work in Khon Kaen University (Nong Khai campus) as a lecturer of on the tourism major. My main interest has been in sustainable tourism and business in my hometown. I first researched into historical sustainable tourism development. I spotted why tourists had spent less time in Nong Khai than in previous years. I was inspired to find out how to attract tourists and building activity for them to

spend more time in Nong Khai, which meant Nong Khai business would be able to gain tourist revenues. Also, the accommodation business could earn more revenue.

During 2005 to 2011, I gained more experience in tourism studies; my interest in the hotel business still existed in my mind as I saw the steady growth of the accommodation numbers. Mostly, they are SMHs and many of them have just between 5 and 30 rooms. My personal answer was that these accommodation firms do not really have a vision or tourism attitude but they have been motivated by something, which is supposed to be personal.

Along with the growth and change in the commercial sector in the Nong Khai residential area. I can see that there is a cultural value that influences Nong Khai people to move on their social status and deliver family happiness, which is important in Thai society. Though I am familiar with the cultural attitude as I am local, I started to realize how powerful is the cultural influence on Thai business entrepreneurs. I have inherently seen that for Thai society, social acceptance and family happiness mean so much. To be successful with children's lives is the responsibility of parents, giving them education and acceptance by people in the society. These are also embedded in my personal point of view. Moreover, my family business seems to come from personal reasons of my parents. My curiosity was enhanced as I think there would not only be one personal reason for many SMH owners.

The interest in environmental concerns started when I noticed a number of TV programmes encouraging people to be more aware of environmental resource usage. I, myself, am becoming more environmentally oriented, starting by recycling, reusing tiny things and then developing environmentally friendly behaviour on a daily basis. However, I am not able to encourage my parents to be more conscious of energy saving. This is due to my having no power in my family business and it is very difficult to encourage older people like them. They said to me that "our staff are always saving those energy usage for us"; actually, they never check up their staff. I think if my parents do not run check-ups, how could staff become more concerned about energy saving.

On the other hand, the organisational atmosphere of my family business is basically simple and not that like a work surrounding; it is like a place where a group of people

gather and work together with a comfortable feeling. I can see that they work hard but they are happy and could not be happier. My parents even let the staff manage and operate almost everything, as our staff do not only work in one position: they must work as housekeeper, gardener, and receptionist at the same time.

My family business has four people working in two shifts, from 7 am to 5 pm and from 5 pm to 7 am, a couple of people on each shift. We have 19 rooms with no additional facilities. Of course, we have the special service for some guests because we cannot deny this specific request as other similar accommodation business also provide it. I am familiar with this kind of service, therefore, I can understand the nature of accommodation SMHs.

However, there are some questions stuck in my mind, as Nong Khai is in the special economic zone planning for the Asean Economic Community (AEC), which will be inaugurated in 2017. Many SMHs are not up to speed with tourism trends, my business for instance. Additionally, environmental concerns are now widespread in the global perception. Personally, Nong Khai locals are not actually into this environmental problem. I can understand what Thai people think about, it is maybe too far away for them. Our country has never experienced scarcity or drought, our culture is taught to be calm and peaceful, searching for happiness and avoiding conflict. However, our culture also manifests a downward attitude, which has negative influence on Thai behaviour such as: being accepted by society one must be prosperous and wealthy; being in high government authority can gain respect and this has led to the point that whatever the way they use for becoming rich and powerful, they would try to have it. As solely money can buy power and social position, though not everyone behaves similarly. It is a mix in this society.

I could not completely claim that every SMH is influenced by what I have mentioned. However, I am sure that there is likely a cultural influence towards SMHs' behaviours as there are some characteristics alike. Moreover, what I do not know is the actual problem and business environmental operation. I cannot claim that they would face similar problems. Moreover, having interrogations is not only my interest, I would like to search

for the real action and in-depth understanding of the problems, along with how to deal with such Thai people in terms of enhancing their environmental value and attitude.

11.7.3 Continuity of environmental study in the PhD

I started working as a tourism lecturer in Khon Kaen University, Nong Khai campus, in 2006. I was then sponsored by my affiliation to move on to PhD study, which is when environmental study became my first interest. I have had an opportunity to research in this area in accordance with the cultural dimension. The research was conducted from 2012 to 2015.

Undertaking research in Nong Khai province

I started the survey and pilot study in 2012. My first intention was to employ mixed methods in the study. Therefore, my first pilot study was conducted with 30 samples in Udonthani, the neighbour city to Nong Khai.

The questionnaire was sent to the entrepreneurs and the feedback was really low. Meanwhile, I questioned how I can finish the research within time. Consequently, along with suggestions from my supervisor, I decided to conduct an interpretive method for my main study. Then the second pilot study was conducted in 2013. This pilot study led me to the reality of the research, as I have limited time remaining. At the beginning of the pilot stage, I was quite confident that I could be able to approach the prospected key informant comfortably. Due to my identity, I am a local and also I am able to speak the native language (E-sarn, not the official Thai language), I was planning to approach the SMH owners/managers on my own. Luckily, I was introduced by one of my badminton colleagues as it is difficult to get to SMH owners/managers, particularly in the district area. The local authority must introduce me to them. Otherwise the SMH owners/managers would not allow me to interview them. This due to confidentiality and trust, as SMHs rely on the local government.

My badminton colleague is also working in government and his position is very respected. He said he might be able to help me by introducing me to his official to run this introduction to SMH entrepreneurs. Additionally, this badminton colleague would be able also to introduce me to other officials in other districts, as he was working in almost all districts in Nong Khai. He is relatively powerful in terms of position and his work is linked with many local governments (in districts). He later called those officials who are relevant to tourism administration in each district. I was, then, able to take this opportunity to introduce myself to those officials. Briefly telling them about my research, they, then, brought me to the SMH owners/managers who were likely to be able to give me an interview. I misunderstood that this introduction period would be easy; actually, it is very important to get to someone I have never known before, even though my research was not only for academic purpose. They would never trust or give me participation as I have no benefit for them, or it is wasting their time. Moreover, I am not a powerful person who can put pressure on them.

This introducing stage was time-consuming, as I was not only studying in one town, but there were six different districts I had to conduct introductions in. In one district I was given high respect to observe more than what I would want to. The more I spent time on something I do not want to do, the better I am trusted. However, I cannot deny this due to the high authority in the district. It is my culture that sometime I must *Kreng Jai* the people who are giving me opportunity to do my work. Though I really do not want to do this and I can turn down their invitation, it would not have affected my work at all. But I would feel guilty not doing so.

I spent time with many journeys for just introducing myself to SMH owners/managers and some trips on those local agents' invitation. However, these were precious experiences I could not have asked for. After that stage, I begun selecting who were likely to be my key informants; my judgement was based on: i) key informants should be from every district, and ii) they should be able to give me an interview more than once (if needed). My criteria gave me long journeys from east to west and vice versa. I was pretty fortunate that since

local government officials introduced me, I was able to interview SMHs with no declinations. Though some SMH owners/managers were very busy, they finally gave me their available time.

I was considerably impressed by what happened while conducting the field trip. I was given kind hospitality; I can feel that they believe that I am a reliable person. I was invited to visit sometimes after my study. I found no one like the others: there are various reasons and different SMH personal backgrounds. However, Thai people are still very unique. Thai are kind and welcome and totally unlike Westerners.

We are so culturally influenced and are a collective characteristic nation. We are so complicated in our way of feeling; I can understand what they are saying, though they are not saying it straightforwardly. This is the way I am used to. I have found that cultural value is dominant in Thai society and it plays high value in the suburban area. The change in Thai society in the countryside is not really different, they perceive news, trends via mass media communication but they do not really adopt suggestions into their daily life especially the things that affect their cultural attitude.

I am still in touch with those SMH owners/managers; actually, I could say that almost all the SMHs whom I was conducting interviews with are owners. This reflects the SMH context in Nong Khai, that hotel businesses are particularly family businesses also. I did not conduct interviews with many SMHs in the town centre, which is obviously different in economic size and population. However, I can still see the accommodation size and characteristics from my personal experience and that most of them are family businesses and or administrated by the owner.

At the present, the town centre has increased in medium-sized businesses as the AEC will be inaugurated within a couple of years. I can see hotel chains and new emerging SMH businesses all the time.

Economic opportunity has surely played significant value to new emerging business entrepreneurs, but still many of the SMHs are operated by local people. Therefore, they still retain some similar characteristics.

Once I finished interviewing the SMHs, I came across the notion that I have a lack of people who are involved with legal actions. As my research was also interested in environmental action, I cannot know the whole picture of the environmental situation if I do not conduct research with government officials. As business absolutely relates to legal action and these SMHs must really comply with the legislative environmental issues.

It was remarked that once I had been given trust by the SMH owners/managers, my report on the theme back to the SMHs was easy. I do not know whether they were actually reading on it. They just say “yes, it was okay, I said truth”. It took many calls to them, to find that when they got the report, they were not aware of it, I thought. However, I can only emphasise them to look at that, and I still do not know whether they are actually reading it.

I started conducting interviews with government authorities in 2015. I found it easy to approach the government officials. My personal connection and also an official introduction to them helped. Personally, I think the government agents are more understanding than the local people, so that I did not have to spend so much time on the introduction. I also found that even on the government side, the authorities are also influenced by the cultural aspect. They, sometimes, show me their reluctance to tell me “what we’ve already known”. Anyway, I know it is likely our common thought that our societies are relationship-oriented. However, it is noted that Thai government authorities in suburban areas are closer to the local people in comparison to city governmental agents. Moreover, the government system does not mean that illegal action would be taken by them, sometimes it means to accommodate the progress to finish quickly by not taking any illegal activity. At this present time, I found that government authorities are now more aware of their actions. They would not want to get involved with serious trouble in future. Additionally, the study is related to environmental actions which are more alerted to among media and social perception, and there is the gap of legal action that can be avoided by SMHs. Therefore, illegal action in terms of environmental management is least important, as SMHs have not yet taken trouble in the area.

The government official actions towards SMHs also depend on interaction with SMHs and their duties. I am not suspicious as the Thai government system works based on their legal duties; although it is hardly integrated due to the Thai organisation culture. They give each other respect. The flexibility of order is inherently found in rural communities. Law cannot always be the way out for a relationship-based society.

11.7.4 After main data collection

Once I finished the main data collection stage, I found that my society is very different from Western society. As I have lived in the United Kingdom for almost four years, I have learnt a lot. I can see the difference regarding relationships, the interaction of the Westerner and Easterner. This study has given me clear answers that my society is tied to relationshiporientation in some instances. Thai people are less aware of their daily resource usage, but claimed others' responsibility on this energy concern. However, I can see the gradual change in Nong Khai society as new entrepreneurs are emerging. The reason for having SMHs may not be about relationships, but it is also about financial opportunity. This could be found evidently in the town centre, but in rural areas people are still motivated by personal reasons. At this juncture, I cannot see how the Western practice could fit with Thai people if they do not put the cultural suggestion onto the practice. Environmental practice is easy to implement but to change the attitude and the people's behaviour needs a cultural strategy to start it up. I personally feel aware of my society, that it is very difficult to change Thai people's attitude towards something that has been taught for many generations. However, they may be changed if this action is taken collectively, I thought.

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Appendix 1: Ethical scrutiny

UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

Research Ethics Scrutiny (Annex to RS1 form)

SECTION A

Registration No: 1034244

Candidate: Angwara Na Soontorn

Research Institute: Institute of Tourism Research (INTOUR)

Research Topic: Understanding Responsible Tourism Management in Small and Medium Hotel Businesses: A case study of the city of Nong Khai, Thailand

External Funding: None

The candidate is required to summarise in the box below the ethical issues involved in the research proposal and how they will be addressed. In any proposal involving human participants the following should be provided:

- clear explanation of how informed consent will be obtained:

- how will confidentiality and anonymity be observed:
- how will the nature of the research, its purpose and the means of dissemination of the outcomes be communicated to participants,
- how personal data will be stored and secured
- if participants are being placed under any form of stress (physical or mental) identify what steps are being taken to minimise risk

If protocols are being used that have already received University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) ethical approval then please specify. Roles of any collaborating institutions should be clearly identified. Reference should be made to the appropriate professional body code of practice.

Ethical issues involved in the research proposal:

- *What is this research all about?*

The propose study focuses on the understanding of Responsible tourism of small and medium hotels. Responsible tourism in this context is defined as managing *the business in a way that benefits its local community, environmental and its business opportunity*. Based in Nong Khai in Thailand, there has been a substantial increase in the number of SMH's in the last few years. Subsequently, the sector has become a significant consumer of natural resources. There exists a current lack of environmental practice, raising questions about hotel owner/managers understanding of environmental practice, management and sustainable development.

- *Who is responsible for it?*

Angwara Na Soontorn is currently undertaking this MPhil/PhD research project under the direct supervision of Professor Andrew Holden (D.S) and Dr.Carol Tie.

- *How will research participants be selected?*

Prospective research participants of this emergent study will be selected based on purposive sampling of SMH owners and stakeholders involved in environmental policy, i.e. local politicians and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGO's) and environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGO's).

How will the findings recorded?

The study involves focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews of research participants in the city of Nong Khai, Thailand. The

audio recording will be used only with prior informed consent from the research participants. Without their consent, the researcher will use pen and paper to take notes of the interviews.

- *Who will look at the resulting data?*

The resultant findings are presented in the final report to its funding body (University of Bedfordshire) and the supervisors. The findings might also be used in scholarly publications, academic symposia, university classes, professional training activities or dissemination of results to the media, policymakers, government and industry. This will be done without the revelation of the respondents' identity. (The researcher will endeavour to keep confidentiality and anonymity as strictly as possible.)

- *What will be done with this material?*

The recordings and interview transcripts will be kept securely and used solely for research and academic purposes. The overarching aim is the completion of a doctoral thesis. The secondary aim is disseminate the research finding at meetings and conferences and also publish the results of the research in journals and, books according to academic publishing standards.

- *What are the risks of this study?*

The study does not have a high propensity for 'risk', from the perspective of either the researcher or the researched. The research will be conducted in the researcher's native language and cultural environment. Individual semi-structured interviews will be conducted in social space rather than individual space (i.e. not in a respondent's home) when the interviewee is of the opposite gender.

The researched are at no risk, provided their identity remains anonymous. If their identity was exposed, there is a possible risk of potential conflict with their employer over comments made about the environment.

However, in many cases the interviewees are likely to be at the highest echelon of their businesses.

- *How will the anonymity and confidentiality be kept for research participants?*

Research participants will not be able to be identified since data on identities such as names, phone numbers, and email addresses will not be collected. Great care will be taken when conducting the interviews not to mention names of the respondents, and the recordings/interview scripts will not be made available outside this research project.

Although quotes might be used in the thesis, pseudonyms will be used and the participants' name and identity will not be revealed so that anonymity will be ensured (participants' identity and the information they provide will not be able to be linked). The researcher will discard the names and addresses of subjects as soon as possible and refer to subjects by a code number only, to protect anonymity. A separate code book will be kept and stored in different location from the interview data so that respondents can be identified if they would like to withdraw from the interviews.

- *Are there benefits to taking part in this research?*

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. The primary benefits from this work are for the contribution to scientific understanding of the phenomenon of tourism. The availability of the data may lead to an improvement in the field of tourism research and development of which participants or others may be a direct or indirect beneficiary. If participants are interested in the outcomes of the research, arrangements can be made to provide them with a summary of the finished project.

- *Will research participants receive any payment or other monetary benefits?*

No, research participants will receive no payment for their contribution, and under no circumstances will the findings be used for commercial

purposes. Therefore, participants shall not expect any royalties or monetary rewards from the research project in the future. The research project relies on and appreciates the genuine goodwill of the participants.

Answer the following question by deleting as appropriate:

1. Does the study involve vulnerable participants or those unable to give informed consent (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities, your own students)?

~~Yes~~ **No**

2. Will the study require permission of a gatekeeper for access to participants (e.g. schools, self-help groups, residential homes)?

~~Yes~~ **No**

3. Will it be necessary for participants to be involved without consent (e.g. covert observation in non-public places)?

~~Yes~~ **No**

4. Will the study involve sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, substance abuse)?

~~Yes~~ **No**

5. Will blood or tissue samples be taken from participants?

~~Yes~~ **No**

6. Will the research involve intrusive interventions (e.g. drugs, hypnosis, physical exercise)?

~~Yes~~ **No**

7. Will financial or other inducements be offered to participants (except reasonable expenses)?

~~Yes~~ **No**

8. Will the research investigate any aspect of illegal activity?

Yes No

9. Will participants be stressed beyond what is normal for them?

Yes No

10. Will the study involve participants from the NHS (e.g. patients or staff)?

Yes* No

If you have answered yes to any of the above questions or if you consider that there are other significant ethical issues then details should be included in your summary above. If you have answered yes to Question 1 then a clear justification for the importance of the research must be provided.

*Please note if the answer to Question 10 is yes then the proposal should be submitted through **NHS research ethics approval procedures** to the appropriate **COREC**. The UREC should be informed of the outcome.

Checklist of documents which should be included:

- ☒ Project proposal (with details of methodology) & source of funding
- ☐ Documentation seeking informed consent (if appropriate)
- ☐ Information sheet for participants (if appropriate)
- ☐ Interview schedule (if appropriate)

Signature of Applicant:

Date:

Angwara Na Soontorn

6 October 2011

Signature of Director of Studies:

Date:

A. Holden

06 October 2011

This form together with a copy of the research proposal should be submitted to the Research Institute Director for consideration by the Research Institute Ethics Committee/Panel

Note you cannot commence collection of research data until this form has been approved

SECTION B To be completed by the Research Institute Ethics Committee:

Comments:

Approved

Signature Chair of Research Institute Ethics Committee:

Date:

This form should then be filed with the RS1 form

If in the judgement of the committee there are significant ethical issues for which there is not agreed practice then further ethical consideration is required before approval can be given and the proposal with the committees comments should be forwarded to the secretary of the UREC for consideration.

There are significant ethical issues which require further guidance

Signature Chair of Research Institute Ethics Committee:

Date:

This form together with the recommendation and a copy of the research proposal should then be submitted to the University Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 2: Research information sheet for SMHs

In English



Institute for Tourism Research
Park Square Luton
Bedfordshire
United Kingdom
LU1 3JU
www.beds.ac.uk

Research Information Sheet for the Hotel Owner/Manager

You are being invited to participate in a research study entitled
An Eastern perspective of sustainable tourism: the case of small and medium-sized
hotels in Nong Khai , Thailand

This research is for my PhD dissertation at the Institute for Tourism Research (INTOUR), University of Bedfordshire, United Kingdom. The aim of the research is to provide a comprehensive analysis of sustainable tourism and, in particular, environmentally conscious practice, in small and medium-sized hotels (SMHs) in Nong Khai, Thailand. You are invited to participate in this study because you are engaged in the management of small and medium-sized hotels in Nong Khai city and possess valuable information from an environmental perspective. There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this study. The information you provide will help me understand the worldview and on-site experience of the hotel managers, which will consequently provide a valuable insight for all stakeholders on how responsible tourism can be developed, implemented and promoted appropriately in Thailand.

Your participation in this project will involve a 45-60 minute individual interview and focus group discussion asking questions related to your perspectives of responsible

tourism. This conversation will be recorded only with your permission. During the interview, your demographic characteristics will be collected for further data research.

Should you feel the need to withdraw from the study, you may do so without question at any time. If you do withdraw at any stage, any information you have provided will be destroyed. You can also refuse to answer to any questions, which you feel uncomfortable with. The results of the study will be published but you are assured of the complete anonymity and confidentiality of your information since only pseudonyms will be used in any written and/or oral presentations. All material collected will be kept confidentially. No other person besides my supervisors (Professor Dr. Peter M. Burns and Professor Dr. Andrew Holden) and me will have access to your data. The dissertation will be submitted to University of Bedfordshire and deposited in the University Library and the British Library. It is intended that one or more articles will be submitted for publication in scholarly journals. Interview and focus group transcription will be destroyed two years after the end of the project. If you agree to participate, please sign a consent form to acknowledge your voluntary participation in the study.

I will be very pleased to discuss any questions or concerns you have about your participation or your rights in this study. You may contact me at

Angwara.nasootorn@beds.ac.uk or at 66 (0) 815547881.

Angwara Na Soontorn

PhD student, the Institute for Tourism Research, the University of Bedfordshire.



สถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว

พาร์ค สเตจ อูตัน

เบดฟอร์ดไชร์

สหราชอาณาจักร

LU1 3JU

www.beds.ac.uk

รายละเอียดการศึกษาสำหรับผู้จัดการโรงแรม

ท่านเป็นผู้มีส่วนร่วมในการศึกษาเรื่อง An Eastern perspective of responsible tourism: the case of small and medium-sized hotels in Nong Khai , Thailand

การศึกษานี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของวิทยานิพนธ์ปริญญาเอกของสถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์ ประเทศสหราชอาณาจักร จุดประสงค์การศึกษาเพื่อวิเคราะห์ภาพรวมของการท่องเที่ยวอย่างมีความรับผิดชอบ โดยเฉพาะการด้านการจัดการสิ่งแวดล้อมในโรงแรมขนาดกลางและขนาดเล็กในจังหวัดหนองคาย ท่านได้มีส่วนร่วมให้ข้อมูลในครั้งนี้เพราะท่านได้เกี่ยวข้องกับการจัดการในโรงแรมขนาดกลาง และขนาดเล็กของจังหวัดหนองคายซึ่งมีความสำคัญอย่างมากในการให้ข้อมูลต่อการศึกษา ข้อมูลที่ท่าน ได้เปิดเผยจะช่วยให้ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจกระบวนการตัดสินใจของผู้จัดการโรงแรมผ่านประสบการณ์ ซึ่งเป็น ข้อมูลที่เป็นประโยชน์อย่างยิ่งสำหรับผู้มีส่วนเกี่ยวข้อง/ได้เสีย ต่อการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวอย่างมีความรับผิดชอบ เพื่อการพัฒนาและสนับสนุนการท่องเที่ยวอย่างเหมาะสมในประเทศไทย

การให้ข้อมูลในครั้งนี้จะใช้เวลาประมาณ 45 ถึง 60 นาที โดยการสัมภาษณ์เกี่ยวข้องกับความเห็นของท่านต่อการท่องเที่ยวอย่างมีความรับผิดชอบ การสนทนาจะถูกบันทึกเมื่อท่านให้ความยินยอมเท่านั้น ระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์ ข้อมูลด้านประชากรศาสตร์จะถูกจัดเก็บเพื่อเป็นข้อมูลการศึกษาต่อไป

หากท่านต้องการถอนตัวจากการให้ข้อมูลครั้งนี้ ท่านสามารถยกเลิกการให้ข้อมูลได้โดยไม่ต้องตอบคำถามใด ๆ จนถึงวันสิ้นสุดการเก็บข้อมูลวันที่ 5 สิงหาคม 2558 ท่านสามารถยกเลิกการให้ข้อมูลได้ทุกกรณีและทุกเมื่อ ข้อมูลที่ท่านได้ให้มาก่อนหน้านี้จะถูกทำลาย อนึ่ง หากท่านให้ความร่วมมือ ในระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์ ท่านสามารถปฏิเสธที่จะตอบคำถามที่ทำให้ท่านไม่สบายใจได้ ผลการศึกษาจะถูกเผยแพร่ทางวิชาการ อย่างไรก็ตามหากท่านสามารถมั่นใจได้ว่าข้อมูลส่วนตัวของท่านจะถูกใช้นามแฝงแทน โดยปกปิดชื่อและ สถานะจริง ซึ่งถือเป็นความลับสำคัญยิ่ง จะไม่มีผู้ใดสามารถล่วงรู้ได้ยกเว้นอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์ คือ ศาสตราจารย์ ดอกเตอร์ แดนดรู โฮลเดิน และ ดอกเตอร์แคลอริน ไทน์ และข้าพเจ้า ซึ่งสามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูล ของท่านได้ วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับสมบูรณ์จะถูกส่งไปยังมหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์ และเก็บไว้ที่ห้องสมุด มหาวิทยาลัย และที่ห้องสมุดแห่งชาติอังกฤษ บทความวิจัยจะถูกเผยแพร่ในเอกสารวิชาการ หลักฐานการ สัมภาษณ์ที่ถูกบันทึกไว้ จะถูกทำลายหลังจากเสร็จสิ้นการศึกษา 2 ปี หากท่านเห็นด้วยใน การให้ความร่วมมือการศึกษาโปรดลงชื่อรับรองความสมัครใจในการศึกษาค้างนี้

ข้าพเจ้ายินดีให้รายละเอียดต่อคำถามหรือข้อสงสัยที่ท่านต้องการให้ชี้แจงเพิ่มเติมในการให้ความร่วมมือครั้งนี้ ท่านสามารถติดต่อข้าพเจ้าโดย จดหมายอิเล็กทรอนิกส์ Angwara.nasootorn@beds.ac.uk หรือโทรศัพท์เคลื่อนที่ 66 (9)4324169.

นางสาวอังคณา ณ สุนทร

นักศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก สถาบันวิจัยการทองเทียร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์

Appendix 3: Research information sheet for government official

In English



Institute for Tourism Research

Park Square Luton

Bedfordshire

United Kingdom

LU1 3JU

www.beds.ac.uk

Research Information Sheet for the Government official

You are being invited to participate in a research study entitled

An Eastern perspective of sustainable tourism: the case of small and medium-sized
hotels in Nong Khai , Thailand

This research is for my PhD dissertation at the Institute for Tourism Research (INTOUR), University of Bedfordshire, United Kingdom. The aim of the research is to provide a comprehensive analysis of sustainable tourism and, in particular, environmentally conscious practice, in small and medium-sized hotels (SMHs) in Nong Khai, Thailand. You are invited to participate in this study because you are engaged in the management of small and medium-sized hotels in Nong Khai city and possess valuable information from an environmental perspective. There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this study. The information you provide will help me understand the worldview and on-site experience of the hotel managers, which will consequently provide a valuable insight for all stakeholders on how responsible tourism can be developed, implemented and promoted appropriately in Thailand.

Your participation in this project will involve a 45-60 minute individual interview and focus group discussion asking questions related to your perspectives of responsible

tourism. This conversation will be recorded only with your permission. During the interview, your demographic characteristics will be collected for further data research.

Should you feel the need to withdraw from the study, you may do so without question at any time. If you do withdraw at any stage, any information you have provided will be destroyed. You can also refuse to answer to any questions, which you feel uncomfortable with. The results of the study will be published but you are assured of the complete anonymity and confidentiality of your information since only pseudonyms will be used in any written and/or oral presentations. All material collected will be kept confidentially. No other person besides my supervisors (Professor Dr. Peter M. Burns and Professor Dr. Andrew Holden) and me will have access to your data. The dissertation will be submitted to University of Bedfordshire and deposited in the University Library and the British Library. It is intended that one or more articles will be submitted for publication in scholarly journals. Interview and focus group transcription will be destroyed two years after the end of the project. If you agree to participate, please sign a consent form to acknowledge your voluntary participation in the study.

I will be very pleased to discuss any questions or concerns you have about your participation or your rights in this study. You may contact me at Angwara.nasootom@beds.ac.uk or at 66 (0) 815547881.

Angwara Na Soontom

PhD student, the Institute for Tourism Research, the University of Bedfordshire.



สถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว
พาร์ค สแคว ดูตัน
เบดฟอร์ดไชร์
สหราชอาณาจักร
LU1 3JU
www.beds.ac.uk

รายละเอียดการศึกษาสำหรับเจ้าหน้าที่ภาครัฐ

ท่านเป็นผู้มีส่วนร่วมในการศึกษาเรื่อง An Eastern perspective of sustainable tourism: the case of small and medium-sized hotels in Nong Khai , Thailand

การศึกษานี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของวิทยานิพนธ์ปริญญาเอกของสถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์ ประเทศสหราชอาณาจักร จุดประสงค์การศึกษาเพื่อวิเคราะห์ภาพรวมของการท่องเที่ยวอย่างมีความรับผิดชอบ โดยเฉพาะการด้านการจัดการสิ่งแวดล้อมในโรงแรมขนาดกลางและขนาดเล็กในจังหวัดหนองคาย ท่านได้มีส่วนร่วมให้ข้อมูลในครั้งนี้เพราะท่านได้เกี่ยวข้องกับการจัดการในโรงแรมขนาดกลาง และขนาดเล็กของจังหวัดหนองคายซึ่งมีความสำคัญอย่างมากในการให้ข้อมูลต่อการศึกษา ข้อมูลที่ท่าน ได้เปิดเผยจะช่วยให้ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจกระบวนการตัดสินใจของผู้จัดการโรงแรมผ่านประสบการณ์ ซึ่งเป็น ข้อมูลที่เป็นประโยชน์อย่างยิ่งสำหรับผู้มีส่วนเกี่ยวข้อง/ได้เสีย ต่อการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวอย่างมีความรับผิดชอบ เพื่อการพัฒนาและสนับสนุนการท่องเที่ยวอย่างเหมาะสมในประเทศไทย

การให้ข้อมูลในครั้งนี้จะใช้เวลาประมาณ 45 ถึง 60 นาที โดยการสัมภาษณ์เดี่ยวเกี่ยวข้องกับความเห็นของท่านต่อการท่องเที่ยวอย่างมีความรับผิดชอบ การสนทนาจะถูกบันทึกเมื่อท่านให้ความยินยอมเท่านั้น ระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์ ข้อมูลด้านประชากรศาสตร์จะถูกจัดเก็บเพื่อเป็นข้อมูลการศึกษาต่อไป

หากท่านต้องการถอนตัวจากการให้ข้อมูลครั้งนี้ ท่านสามารถยกเลิกการให้ข้อมูลได้โดยไม่ต้องตอบคำถามใด ๆ จนถึงวันสิ้นสุดการเก็บข้อมูลวันที่ 5 สิงหาคม 2558 ท่านสามารถยกเลิกการให้ข้อมูลได้ทุกกรณีและทุกเมื่อ ข้อมูลที่ท่านได้ให้มาก่อนหน้านี้จะถูกทำลาย อนึ่ง หากท่านให้ความร่วมมือ ในระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์ ท่านสามารถปฏิเสธที่จะตอบคำถามที่ทำให้ท่านไม่สบายใจได้ ผลการศึกษาจะถูกเผยแพร่ทางวิชาการ อย่างไรก็ตามท่านสามารถมั่นใจได้ว่าข้อมูลส่วนตัวของท่านจะถูกใช้ नामแฝงแทน โดยปกปิดชื่อและ สถานะจริง ซึ่งถือเป็นความลับสำคัญยิ่ง จะไม่มีผู้ใดสามารถล่วงรู้ได้ยกเว้นอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์ คือ ศาสตราจารย์ ดอกเตอร์ แคนดรู ไซลเด็น และ ดอกเตอร์แคลธรีน ไทน์ และข้าพเจ้า ซึ่งสามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูล ของท่านได้ วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับสมบูรณ์จะถูกส่งไปยังมหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์ และเก็บไว้ที่ห้องสมุด มหาวิทยาลัย และที่ห้องสมุดแห่งชาติอังกฤษ บทความวิจัยจะถูกเผยแพร่ในเอกสารวิชาการ หลักฐานการ สัมภาษณ์ที่ถูกบันทึกไว้ จะถูกทำลายหลังจากเสร็จสิ้นการศึกษา 2 ปี หากท่านเห็นด้วยใน การให้ความร่วมมือการศึกษาโปรดลงชื่อรับรองความสมัครใจในการศึกษาครั้งนี้


ข้าพเจ้ายินดีให้รายละเอียดต่อคำถามหรือข้อสงสัยที่ท่านต้องการให้ชี้แจงเพิ่มเติมในการให้ความร่วมมือครั้งนี้ ท่านสามารถติดต่อข้าพเจ้าโดย จดหมายอิเล็กทรอนิกส์ Angwara.nasootorn@beds.ac.uk หรือโทรศัพท์เคลื่อนที่ 66 (8)1554781.

นางสาวอังคิรา ณ สุนทร

นักศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก สถาบันวิจัยการทองเทียว มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์

Appendix 4: Consent form for SMHs

In Thai



University of
Bedfordshire

สถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว
พาร์ค สแคว อูตัน
เบดฟอร์ดไชร์
สหราชอาณาจักร
LU1 3JU
www.beds.ac.uk

แบบยินยอม เจ้าของ/ผู้จัดการ โรงแรม

An Eastern perspective of responsible tourism: the case of small and medium-sized hotels in Nong Khai,
Thailand

รายละเอียดผู้วิจัย
นางสาวอังคณา ณ สุนทร
นักศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก สถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์ รายละเอียดการติดต่อ จดหมายอิเล็กทรอนิกส์
Angwara.nasontorn@beds.ac.uk หรือโทรศัพท์ 66 (8) 15547881

เลขอ้างอิงผู้ให้ข้อมูล

โปรดลงลายมือ

1. ข้าพเจ้ายืนยันว่าได้อ่านและทำความเข้าใจรายละเอียดการทำการศึกษาและได้
มีโอกาสซักถามข้อสงสัยจนได้รับคำตอบเป็นที่พอใจแล้ว ☐

2. ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจว่าการให้ความร่วมมือของข้าพเจ้าเป็นไปด้วยความสมัครใจและข้าพเจ้า
สามารถถอนตัวออกจากการศึกษานี้ได้ตลอดเวลาโดยไม่ต้องให้เหตุผลใดๆ ☐

3. ข้าพเจ้าเห็นพ้องที่จะให้ความร่วมมือการศึกษาข้างต้น ☐

	โปรดเลือก	
	ใช่	ไม่ใช่
4. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการบันทึกเสียงการสัมภาษณ์/จัดกลุ่มสนทนา	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการบันทึกภาพเคลื่อนไหวการสัมภาษณ์/จัดกลุ่มสนทนา	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการใช้ชื่อนิรนาม/นามแฝงในการเผยแพร่เอกสาร	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการเก็บข้อมูลจากการศึกษา (ภายหลังที่มีการใช้ชื่อนิรนาม/นามแฝง) ในการศึกษาในอนาคต	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ชื่อผู้ให้ข้อมูล

วันที่

ลายเซ็น

Appendix 5: Consent form for government official

In Thai



สถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว
พาร์ค สแนว ดูตัน
เบดฟอร์ดไชร์
สหราชอาณาจักร
LU1 3JU
www.beds.ac.uk

แบบยินยอม (เจ้าหน้าที่ภาครัฐ) Government official

An Eastern perspective of responsible tourism: the case of small and medium-sized hotels in Nong Khai, Thailand

รายละเอียดผู้วิจัย

นางสาวอังศุภา ณ สุนทร

นักศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก สถาบันวิจัยการท่องเที่ยว มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดไชร์ รายละเอียดการติดต่อ จดหมายอิเล็กทรอนิกส์

Angwara.nasontorn@beds.ac.uk หรือโทรศัพท์ 66 (8)15547881

เลขอ้างอิงผู้ให้ข้อมูล

โปรดลงลายมือ

1. ข้าพเจ้ายืนยันว่าได้อ่านและทำความเข้าใจรายละเอียดการทำการศึกษ และได้
มีเอกสารคำถามข้อสงสัยจนได้รับคำตอบเป็นที่พอใจแล้ว

☐

2. ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจว่าการให้ความร่วมมือของข้าพเจ้าเป็นไปด้วยความสมัครใจและข้าพเจ้า
สามารถถอนตัวออกจากการศึกษานี้ได้ตลอดเวลาโดยไม่ต้องให้เหตุผลใดๆ

☐

3. ข้าพเจ้าเห็นพ้องที่จะให้ความร่วมมือการศึกษาข้างต้น

☐

	โปรดเลือก	
	ใช่	ไม่ใช่
4. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการบันทึกเสียงการสัมภาษณ์/จัดกลุ่มสนทนา	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการบันทึกภาพเคลื่อนไหวการสัมภาษณ์/จัดกลุ่มสนทนา	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการใช้ชื่อนิรนาม/นามแฝงในการเผยแพร่เอกสาร	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการเก็บข้อมูลจากการศึกษา (ภายหลังที่มีการใช้ชื่อนิรนาม/นามแฝง) ในการศึกษาในอนาคต	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ชื่อผู้ให้ข้อมูล

วันที่

ลายเซ็น

Appendix 6: Full demographic details of the SMHs

No.	Name	Positions	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education	Interview date	Business years
RF1	Ann	Owner	Female	62	Married	Master degree	25 April 2015	6 months
RF2	Denish	Owner and Manager	Male	34	Divorced	High school	9 April 2014	4 years
RF3	Chai	Owner	Male	66	Married	High school	7 April 2014	15+ years
RF4	Krissy	Owner/Housekeeper	Female	56	Married	Middle school	18 April 2014	12+ years
RF5	Nan	Owner/Housekeeper	Female	46	Married	High school	15 March 2014	3 years
RF6	Ken	Owner/Housekeeper	Male	47	Married	Bachelor's degree	25 April 2014	10+ years
RF7	Tan	Owner/Manager	Male	52	Married	Middle school	19 May 2015	10+ years

No.	Name	Positions	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education	Interview date	Business years
RF8	Sine	Owner/Housekeeper	Female	45	Married	Secondary school	22 February 2014	7 months
RF9	Donna	Manager	Female	41	Married	High school	10 February 2014	7+ years
RF10	Jay	Owner/Manager assistant	Male	31	Single	Middle school	10 May 2014	5+ years
RF11	Sandy	Owner/Manager	Female	40	Married	Master's degree	4 April 2014	3 years
RF12	James	Owner/Manager	Male	26	Single	Bachelor's degree	4 May 2014	1 years
RF13	Berry	Owner/Manager	Female	37	Divorced	Bachelor's degree	2 May 2015	17+ years
RF14	Bob	Manager	Male	45	Married	Master's degree	3 March 2014	4 years
RF15	Nat	Owner/Housekeeper	Female	35	Married	Secondary school	4 March 2014	15+ years
RF16	Vin	Owner	Male	59	Married	High school	3 March 2014	15+ years
RF17	Penny	Owner/Manager	Female	53	Married	Middle school	7 February 2014	8 years

No.	Name	Positions	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education	Interview date	Business years
RF18	Carrey	Manager	Female	36	Married	Bachelor's degree	10 February 2014	1 years
RF19	Ted	Manager	Male	46	Married	Master's degree	20 April 2015	20+ years
RF20	Landy	Manager	Female	50	Married	Bachelor's degree	13 March 2014	4 years
RF21	Sammy	Owner	Female	54	Married	High school	17 March 2014	4 years
RF22	Kimmy	Owner	Female	42	Married	High school	5 May 2015	3 years
RF23	Dave	Owner/Manager	Male	58	Married	Middle school	8 May 2015	15+ years
RF24	Pam	Owner/Housekeeper	Female	47	Single	High school	24 May 2015	5 years
RF25	Su	Owner/manager	Female	39	Married	Middle school	12 May 2014	1 year
RF26	Tim	Owner	Male	51	Married	High school	12 May 2014	7 years
RF27	Mike	Owner/housekeeper	Male	44	Married	Middle school	19 April 2014	7+ years

Appendix 7: Pictures of the study site

Attractions in Nong Khai city



(a) Phon Pi Sai district is very wellknown for the Naga Fire Ball phenomenon



(b) Sang Kom district, one of the interviewing areas. The district is becoming more favoured by domestic tourists

Appendix 8: Pictures of interviewing and the accommodation



(a) Interviewing with the SMH owner



(b) Inspecting the SMH



(c) Inside the room; one of the SMHs in Nong Khai city



(d) SMH building, normally located in owner's house area



(e) Information about the services and check-out time

Appendix 9: Comparison of Nong Khai tourism by year

type of data	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Average Expenditure (Baht/Person/Day)					
Tourist					
Thai	n/a	787.19	n/a(863.68)	807.93	773.21
Foreigners	n/a	1453.24	n/a(1,271.25)	1,189.20	1,133.68
Revenue (Million Baht)					
Visitor		1,503	n/a(1,998.24)	1,869.27	1,866.41
Thai	n/a	n/a	n/a(1,463.10)	1,351.27	1,371.93
Foreigners	n/a	n/a	n/a(535.14)	518.00	494.48

ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS					
Establishments	92	27	27	28	28
Rooms	2,231	1,243	1194	1,210	1,502
Occupancy Rate (%)	61.87	65.98	64.04	40.75	39.39
Average Length of Stay (Day)	1.74	1.82	1.65	1.42	1.18
Number of Guest Arrivals	408,520	381,133	276954	248,906	282,629
Thai	391,375	359,155	255941	225,969	249,411
Foreigners	17,145	21,978	21013	22,937	33,218

Source: Department of Tourism, Thailand. Available at <http://www.tourism.go.th/2010/th/statistic/tourism.php> (Access 5th July 2011)

1. Average length of stay/ Average expenditure in 2008 was not applicable, estimated by using data in 2007

2. Not available in subcategories and/or incomplete data collection